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**HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.**

*Religious History and Character of the  
late Rev. William Vidler.*

[In a Letter from the Rev. R. Wright to  
the Editor.]

SIR,

**T**HOUGH the state of Mr. Vidler's health, for many months, led me to fear that his dissolution was nigh, I was much affected when the news of that event reached me. We had been long and intimately acquainted; our acquaintance and friendship commenced in peculiar circumstances, which united us the more firmly, and rendered our mutual attachment the stronger and more lasting. Many subjects in theology did we investigate together; our minds were opened to each other without reserve; we took sweet counsel together; our plans and projects for promoting the cause of truth and righteousness, were communicated to each other; and, as much as the distance of our places of residence would admit, for several years we acted in concert, and our labours and exertions were much connected. I shall ever esteem my intimacy with this good man, as one, and not the least, of the manifold blessings which the Almighty, in his bountiful providence, hath bestowed upon me. Now, alas! my beloved friend is no more, his labours are finished, he rests in the tomb, but his works will follow him, his reward is sure. We shall meet again in brighter scenes and happier circumstances, where friendship will be renewed and perfected, and usefulness and happiness no more be interrupted.

My acquaintance with Mr. Vidler commenced in the year 1798. I was then a very low Sabellian, or more properly an Unitarian; but still retaining a few modes of expression which were inconsistent, and in becoming clearly and avowedly an Unitarian, I had only to change a few phrases, not a single idea either re-

specting the Trinity or the person of Christ. He was at that time a Trinitarian, but so completely liberal, and so candid in conversation, that I soon discovered that any difference of sentiment that existed between us, would not prevent a pleasing and edifying intimacy. We were both of us Universalists. The doctrine of the final happiness of all men, the Divine character and perfections, providence and government, and dispensations of grace, as well as the whole work and ministrations of Jesus Christ, as connected with this great subject, which seemed to us to involve all the best interests of the universe, then occupied our chief thought and attention; and to its promotion, and the making known its important uses in vindicating the character and ways of God, establishing the truth of Divine revelation, and the moral good of the world, almost the whole of our labours and exertions were directed. This became a solid ground and strong bond of union between us.

In the year 1797, Mr. Vidler began to publish a periodical work, called the *Universalists' Miscellany*. In the latter part of this year, I sent him a communication, which was the first of the *Ten Letters on Election*, since published separately by my friends in Scotland. I was then totally unknown to him. I sent three or four letters, in succession, before he discovered who or what I was. At length learning that I was a minister, and resided in Wisbeach, he wrote to me, requesting I would visit him, and spend a few weeks with his congregation, while he went on a journey among his old friends in Sussex.—With this invitation I complied.

I arrived at his house on a Saturday morning, and Mr. Vidler set out for Sussex the following Monday morning. The two days we spent together, so far as the public services on the Sunday left us at leisure, were employed

in conversation on a variety of topics in religion. We conversed with evident caution, anxious to discover, as far as possible, each other's thoughts, sentiments, and feelings, and to form a correct estimate of each other; desirous of laying a solid foundation for close and lasting friendship, and co-operation in the same cause. We had both read, thought and preached ourselves out of our former religious connexions, and stood alone as ministers; nor did we then know of any other connexion of ministers, or churches, who would receive us, and with whom we could be comfortably connected. Finding each other thus situated, and that the circumstances we had passed through had been a good deal similar; feeling that it was unpleasant to be cut off from all religious connexions out of a particular society, we were anxious to realize, if possible, the prospect which had opened to us of union and co-operation.

I have been the more particular in stating how my acquaintance with Mr. Vidler commenced, because it was the beginning of a new era in my life, and led, not only to my improvement, but to the religious connexions I have since had the pleasure of forming, and the scenes of public labour in which I have been engaged: and I think it had some influence on his subsequent progress and course.

On the commencement of our acquaintance, I discovered that Mr. Vidler, liberal and candid as he was, regarded what is called Arianism and Socinianism, with some degree of alarm. Intimations of this kind sometimes escaped him when he wrote to me; but his mind was not formed to be kept in ignorance, nor to resist evidence on any subject. He could not help reading, thinking, and conversing freely on all subjects, and was sure to follow the convictions of his mind, and openly profess what he believed to be true.

I have heard him relate many circumstances which operated upon his mind, and led him to embrace the doctrine of the restoration, which prove that he was always disposed to think freely and admit the force of evidence: I cannot recollect them now, so as to state them with accuracy; but some of them were questions asked, or remarks made, by persons

in his congregation at Battle, or whom he happened to meet with in that part of the country, which made impression on his mind, and led to new trains of thought. He told me, more than once, that when he set out on a long journey to collect money for the building of the new meeting house at Battle, he was a Calvinist; and that he returned home from that journey with very different sentiments. This change he ascribed to what he had heard in conversation, and the books which came in his way in the course of that journey, connected with some impressions he had received as already mentioned. He gave me a very interesting account of the meeting at Lewes, when he was expelled from the particular Baptist connexion for becoming an Universalist. He had been appointed to preach the Association Sermon that year; to prevent his doing this, the ministers met the preceding day, and expelled him from the connexion.—His old friend Middleton, of Lewes, who it seems highly esteemed him, was appointed to preach the Association Sermon in his stead; this was a sort of excommunication sermon. Mr. V. finding that he and his supposed heresy were the subject of the discourse, rose up and continued standing during its delivery. In the course of it, after insisting on the pernicious nature and tendency of heresy, Mr. M. seemed apprehensive some of the hearers might conclude that those who maintained such dangerous heresy, must be bad men, cautioned them against this, and said, "so far from it, heretics are sometimes the holiest and best of men; but they are the more dangerous on that account." On his saying this, Mr. V. bowed. He afterwards went with the ministers who had expelled him, and dined with them and their friends at the inn. After the dinner, a suspicion was whispered round the room, that Mr. Middleton, on account of some things he had said in his sermon, was tainted with the same heresy as Mr. V. This coming to Mr. M.'s ear, he rose and appealed to Mr. V. whether he believed such a suspicion to be well founded; on which Mr. V. rose, and declared to the company, that to the best of his knowledge and belief, Mr. M. was perfectly clear of the heresy with which himself stood charged.

Another circumstance which Mr.



Vidler mentioned as making a deep impression on his mind, was, Mr. Winchester's saying, as they were walking together, "a number of things which are thought sacred truths will be found to be erroneous; and many things which are thought errors will be found Divine truths." Mr. V. requested him to state to what points he referred; this Mr. W. declined, and only added, "Go on, and you will find it all out in due time."

I visited Mr. V. again in the summer of 1799, and I think it was at this time we spent, at least, a fortnight together. He lived near Bethnal-green, and we had frequent opportunities of walking together where we were free from interruption. During this visit we investigated a number of subjects, examined the Scriptures together, and discussed freely a variety of points on which our views were different. I recollect, in particular, the existence of the devil was one of the subjects on which we entered. It was proposed to examine the passages of Scripture one by one, in which such a being is supposed to be mentioned, and to endeavour to ascertain, by attending to the context, and whatever might assist us to understand the design of the writer, the real meaning of each passage. Before we got through with this investigation, Mr. V. acknowledged, that by this mode of proceeding, the passages which are supposed to teach the popular notion, began to appear to him in a different light. I found during this visit he was making rapid progress in what is called heterodoxy; and the more I knew of him, the better I thought both of his understanding and his heart.

Mr. V. first visited Wisbeach and Lincolnshire, after he had given up Calvinism, in the year 1801, and had crowded congregations whenever he preached. No preacher was more popular in those parts of the country. His visit to Wisbeach was peculiarly seasonable. Some of my most respected friends in that town had been so alarmed by the sentiments I had openly avowed, that they had not dared to come to hear me for several weeks, though they still continued to respect me, and went to no other place of worship. Their friendship and Christian disposition, led them to invite Mr. V. as my friend, to their houses, and brought them again to the

meeting house. The excellent discourses he delivered, which were both doctrinal and practical, and frequent conversation with him, removed their prejudices, and reconciled them to sentiments which before gave them so much alarm.

During Mr. V.'s stay in Wisbeach, we had large parties, including persons of different religious sentiments, for the free discussion of subjects, almost every evening; and these discussions were of great use. He had at this time given up Trinitarianism, but still maintained the pre-existence of Christ. On this subject he was hard pressed in argument, in particular as the subject has a bearing on the perfect suitableness of our Lord's example, the reality of his temptations, obedience, sufferings, and death. To some questions asked him, he was so ingenuous as to acknowledge he could not reply. I remember he said one evening, when going from a large party, where there had been much free conversation and debate, "If I stay here long you will make a Socinian of me." I can never forget the many pleasing hours we spent together, in various places, from which I derived much information and profit.

Mr. Vidler visited Wisbeach and the parts of Lincolnshire adjoining, several times, and had always large congregations: his company was much sought, his conversation much listened to, and he was highly respected by all the friends in the different places he visited.

It was when, on one of his visits to Wisbeach, in the year 1802, he came forward to Boston, to assist at the settlement of the then newly formed Unitarian church and its minister, on which occasion I accompanied him, he delivered an excellent introductory address, explanatory of the nature of a Christian church, and the principles of Christian liberty. He afterwards delivered an address to the minister, in which among other things he stated what a Christian minister is not:—that he is not a successor of the apostles; the apostles had no successors, their office and work was peculiar to themselves:—that he is not an ambassador of Jesus Christ; he has now no ambassadors in the world; ambassadors had the seal of miracles to accredit their mission:—that he is not a steward of

mysteries; there are no mysteries in religion for him to be steward of, these were opened by the apostles, and are now plainly revealed in the gospel:—that he has no claim to the least degree of dominion over the faith and consciences of others, nor the exercise of authority in matters of religion. Then turning to the young minister, he said, you will ask me what you are: and replied, you are a brother among your brethren, a servant among your fellow servants; but they think you endowed and qualified for the work of the ministry, and have therefore called you to take the lead among them, to be their minister. Then he gave the young man much suitable advice respecting the course it would be proper for him to pursue, and the manner in which he should conduct himself in the office to which he was called.

From Boston, Mr. V. went to the marshes of Lincolnshire, where a few persons had been excommunicated by the Methodists, for doubting eternal punishment, who had written to him requesting he would visit them. He preached in the Town Hall at Louth, and in several places in the marshes: in one of the latter, there was a contest about the meeting-house, of which one of the expelled persons was trustee. Mr. V. refused to enter the meeting-house except the Methodists gave their free consent to his doing it: the calm and truly Christian manner in which he conducted himself, and his endeavours to calm the perturbation of others, excited the admiration of all parties. He preached in a private house, and had many hearers, and was the first person who began to sow the seeds of Unitarianism in those marshes. Though his visit there was short, and never repeated, the few friends who knew him, have ever remembered him with affection. It was when preaching in country towns and villages, and acting as a missionary, that Mr. V. most excelled. In crowded assemblies he deeply fixed the attention, and the hearers were generally both pleased and instructed. Though some would be alarmed, and even irritated, even this produced good. An instance of this kind occurred at Lutton; a serious and pious man was so alarmed and irritated with the sentiments Mr. V. delivered, as to express himself

immediately after in the most violent manner; yet the discourse which so displeased him, took such hold of his mind, that it issued in his becoming an Unitarian, which he ever after continued, and died a member of the Unitarian church at Lutton.

The above are the principal things which occur to me as proper to communicate respecting my late much valued friend, Mr. Vidler.

Your's respectfully,

R. WRIGHT.

*Stourbridge, Dec. 31, 1816.*

SIR,

ALTHOUGH a tribute of respect to the memory of the late Rev. Benjamin Carpenter has already been forwarded to you, and a funeral discourse by his colleague has appeared from the press; yet by desire of some friends of the deceased, the following biographical memoir is presented to you for insertion.

The Rev. B. Carpenter was born at Woodrow, near Bromsgrove, April, 1752. Mr. John Carpenter, grandfather of the deceased, resided at this place till his death, at the age of 45; he was brother to the Rev. Joseph Carpenter, of Warwick and Worcester.\*

Philip, father of the subject of this memoir, pursued the occupation of a husbandman at the same place: he married a daughter of Mr. Lant, a respectable farmer, near Coventry, (her sister married Mr. Campion, of Newbold, near Leamington;) he died May, 1780, aged 66, his widow survived him fourteen years: a tribute of filial respect was paid to her memory by the deceased, which was published 1794: she attained the age of 73.

Of their twelve children, Benjamin was the seventh: another inheriting the paternal name was a youth of extraordinary promise; he was suddenly cut off at the age of 23, when apparently on the point of entering on an advantageous concern in the silk manufactory of Spitalfields. Catherine, who died at the age of 29, was

\* See succession of ministers in those congregations subjoined. The name of Joseph Carpenter occurs in the account book of the Dissenting congregation in Stourbridge 1706 to 1731: the accounts from 1713 to 1720, are in his hand writing.



held in high esteem by her relatives and friends, as a person of excellent disposition and considerable abilities. Joseph died some years since at Luffnan, in Rutlandshire: his son Benjamin is a student at Wymondly. William, an agriculturist at Bourne Heath, near Bromsgrove, died 1808, aged 47. Three brothers and a sister still survive, of whom George is father of Dr. Lant Carpenter, of Exeter.

THE REV. B. CARPENTER received his elementary instruction at a school in Kidderminster, and was afterwards placed under the tuition of the Rev. Joseph Baker, of Cradley, who often spoke of the moral character of his pupil, and of his diligent application and rapid progress in learning, in terms of high approbation.

Hence, he proceeded in 1768, to the Academy at Daventry, over which Dr. Caleb Ashworth then presided as theological tutor, and where the Rev. Noah Hill delivered lectures in the mathematical and classical departments.

Whilst at this seminary, his tutors observed with satisfaction, and bore honourable testimonies to, his exemplary conduct, and to the indefatigable diligence and eminent success with which he prosecuted his various studies.

Having completed his academical course, towards the close of the year 1773, he officiated as minister to a congregation of Protestant Dissenters at Bloxham, in Oxfordshire, continuing however for a few months to deliver lectures on the classics to the students at Daventry.

He was soon afterwards ordained at the Dissenting chapel at Banbury.† His subsequent removals were to West Bromwich, 1775; Stourbridge, 1778; Clapham, where he was co-pastor with the Rev. Thomas Urwick, 1795. After three years, he retired to the neighbourhood of Stourbridge, and preached for some time to the congregations at Kenelworth and Bromsgrove alternately, and then at Bromsgrove only.

In 1807, he resumed his ministerial office at Stourbridge, and continued till the close of his life to

officiate at that place, and at Cradley alternately in connexion with the Rev. James Scott.\*

He departed this life, Saturday, Nov. 23, 1816, having on the Wednesday preceding had an apoplectic seizure.

It may justly be observed concerning our departed friend and brother, that though the nature of his disorder was such as to deprive his family and congregation of the benefit which they might otherwise have derived from his counsels and exhortations in the near prospect of dissolution; yet his countenance and demeanour fully indicated the resignation and serenity of his mind, and the peace which he enjoyed. And we may contemplate with advantage the diligent preparation which he had previously made for his great change, and his anxious desire and earnest endeavours to leave some useful impressions upon the minds of his intimate associates in the ministry, and the people of his charge, before he should be taken from them.†

"The candid and peaceable disposition of the deceased was well known, and generally acknowledged by Christians of every denomination,"‡ to which it may be added, that he was highly respected in the several vicinities in which he at different times resided. Mr. Carpenter soon after his first settlement at Stourbridge, married Eliza, daughter of the Rev. Mr. Wright, of Oundle: his second wife was Ann, daughter of the Rev. James Hancox, of Dudley: and during his residence at Clapham, he married Sophia, daughter of Mr. Wells, silk mercer, Ludgate Hill, London, and widow of John Lewis, Esq. in the East India service, who survives him. Mr. Carpenter published—

Two Volumes of Sermons on the Present and Future State of Man.

Four Sermons on Conformity to the World.

Two Volumes of Lectures on the Works of Creation and Doctrines of Revelation.

Various single Sermons, as, Difference of Sentiment no Objection to

\* See succession of ministers subjoined.

† Funeral Sermon.

‡ Ib.

† Funeral Sermon by Rev. James Scott.

the Exercise of Mutual Love, preached at Dudley Lecture, 1780; Funeral Discourses for his Mother and Mrs. Swaine; on Early Rising; on the Harvest, 1812, the Fading Leaf.

A Liturgy, with Family Prayers, 2nd ed. 1816.

*For the use of Schools.*

A Short Abridgement of the Bible, 4th ed.

Selections from the book of Job, Proverbs, &c. &c.

Succession of ministers in several congregations with which the Rev. Joseph Carpenter and Rev. B. Carpenter were connected.

*Worcester, Angel Street (date of chapel, 1708).*

1. Rev. Thomas Badland or Baldwin.
2. Chewning Blackmoor, son of W. B. Palmer, died 1742.
3. Joseph Carpenter, from Warwick, about 1746, died Jan. 29, 1758, aged 67. Buried in Bromsgrove churchyard.
4. Francis Blackmoor, son of Chewning, died 1761.
5. Dr. Allen, from 1759 to 1764, died 1774, aged 73.
6. John Stokes.
7. Francis Spilsbury from Bromsgrove, 1734 to 1741, removed to Salters' Hall, London, died March 3, 1782, aged 76.
8. Thomas Urwick, removed to Northborough and Clapham, died Feb. 26, 1807, aged 80.
9. Thomas Belsham from Daventry Academy, removed to Daventry.
10. Joseph Gummer from Hereford, removed to Ilminster.
11. George Osborne from West Bromwich, 1784, died Nov. 12, 1812, aged 54.

*West Bromwich, Staffordshire.*

1. Rev. Mr. Pearce, afterwards Dr. P. settled 1718, removed to Chalwood.
2. Richard Wilton, 1720 or 1721, died 1765, aged 82.
3. Thomas Robins, 1762, removed to Daventry, 1776.
4. Benjamin Carpenter, 1775, removed to Stourbridge, 1778.
5. John Humphrys, 1779, removed to London.
6. George Osborne, ——— removed to Worcester, 1784.
7. ——— Barry, ——— removed to London.
8. Joel Maurice from Stretton, 1797, died Dec. 27, 1807, aged 67.

9. James Cooper from Wirksworth, 1808.

*Stourbridge.*

Introductory period of 36 years. Twelve of the ejected ministers previous to the settlement of a church.

*First place of worship built 1698.*

1. Rev. George Flower\* from 1698 to 1733, when he died, aged 59.
2. John Edge† from October, 1734, to July, 1777, died, aged 69.

*Chapel built 1788.*

3. Benjamin Carpenter from June, 1778, to December, 1795.
4. Herbert Jenkins, June, 1796, to Oct. 1806.

— Benjamin Carpenter a second time, died Nov. 23, 1816, aged 64.

5. James Scott, co-pastor, from March, 1807, to 1816, minister also of Park Lane Chapel, Cradley.

*Bm sgrave.‡ (date of chapel, 1693.)*

1. Rev. John Spilsbury ejected from this place, died 1699, aged 71.
2. James Thompson, died 1729.
3. Francis Spilsbury, grandson of John, as above, from 1729 to 1734.
4. ——— Phillips.
5. William Wells, from 1775 to 1795, emigrated to America.
6. John Corrie.
7. ——— Huddie.
8. ——— Evans from Preston.
9. Benjamin Carpenter, removed to Stourbridge, 1807.
10. Roger Ward, 1807.

*Cradley, Worcester.*

*First place of worship built 1707.*

1. Rev. ——— Bassett from 1705 to 1734, when he died, aged 52.

\* Mr. Flower was educated under Mr. Woodhouse, at Sheriff Hales, Staff.; he was chaplain to Philip Foley, Esq. of Prestwood Hall: he was buried at Burton upon Trent, his native town.

† Mr. Edge, a native of Canldwell, near Kidderminster, studied at Bridgnorth under Mr. Fleming: he was buried in the family tomb of the Spilsburys, in Kidderminster churchyard.

‡ At Webb Heath, near Bromsgrove, several ancestors of the family of Kettle once resided, who were members of this congregation. Mr. W. Kettle removed to Birmingham; one of his daughters married the Rev. Dr. Benson, another the Rev. Mr. Murray, of Chester. William, his son, married the daughter of the Rev. Joseph Carpenter, of Worcester.

The families of Spilsbury and Twamley were long resident in and near Bromsgrove.



2. Joseph Fownes from 1735 to 1748, removed to Shrewsbury, died 1789, aged 75.
  3. Noah Jones, 1748 to 1762, removed to Walsall, died 1785, aged —, buried at Walsall.
  4. Joseph Baker from Newtown, from 1762 to 1789, resigned, died 1805, buried at Cradley.
  5. James Scott, 1789 to 1807, sole-pastor, co-pastor with
  6. Benjamin Carpenter, from 1807. to 1816.
- Park Lane Chapel built 1796.*

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*Gregoire, Bishop of Blois.*

THE *Courier*, as a palliative, has given to his readers a list of the persons who voted for the death of Louis XVI. copying it, most probably, from some list published by one of the many libellist partizans, always ready to add to the flame of kingly vengeance. He therein includes the name of the benevolent Gregoire, constitutional Bishop of Blois, thus repeating a calumny which in France his enemies have in vain sought to affix to his name.

Gregoire, at the time of the death of Louis XVI. was absent, as one of the four envoys sent to Savoy; and on its being known that, in the letter sent to him, he had expunged the word death, he was accused to the club of the jacobins, in 1793, for not having voted for the death of the king. In the speech he had pronounced as early as 1792, he had demanded that the penalty of death should be abolished, and that Louis, as the first to enjoy the benefit of the law, should be condemned "*a l'existence*." Thus the papers of that time, and principally the *Journal des Amis*, &c. (No. 5, Feb. 2, 1793) took great care to inscribe his name among those deputies who had not voted for the infliction of capital punishment. Gregoire's enemies, nevertheless, inscribed his name among those who had voted for the king's death; and although he treated the calumny with contempt, when the bishops were assembled in Paris to celebrate their second national council, in 1801, as the calumny was extremely prevalent, they commissioned MOISE, Bishop of St. Claude, to ascertain the facts and make a report. This was perfectly satisfactory, and by order of the coun-

cil, was inserted in *Les Annales de la Religion*, Vol. XIV. p. 35.

It is well known that Bonaparte was not fond of Bishop Gregoire, because, in the senate, he was always opposed to his ambitious projects; and an explosion of his fury in 1810 gave occasion to his flatterers to manifest their odium against Gregoire, and again repeat the falsehood which had been previously destroyed. His friends then reprinted the report laid before the council, with a small preface, and this served fully to establish the innocence of the accused.

How peculiar is the situation of this venerable man. The jacobins accused him for not having voted the king's death, and the anti-jacobins reproved him for having done it! The purchasers of negroes accused him, in the convention, of being a friend and partizan of the English, because he sought to destroy so illegal a trade; and now an English paper, without examining the facts, re-echoes the calumny of his enemies. In the convention he was publicly reproached for seeking to *Christianize* France, (*Moniteur*, an. 2, No. 57), and the incredulous and jacobins besieged him in his own house, and kept his life in jeopardy during 18 months, for having sustained his character and upheld religion in the session of 17 Brumaire, (an. 2), notwithstanding the cloud of enemies with whom he had to contend, (vide *Annual Register*, 1793, page 201, 202), whilst the Catholics have since persecuted him as a heretic. He was avowedly the principal support of religion in France, when it would have been extinguished by the flight of the greatest part of the clergy, and the apostacy of others; and when terror was still the order of the day, from the tribune he demanded the freedom of worship, and eventually was the cause of 80,000 churches being opened. It was he who obtained the freedom of the miserable priests crowded into the hulks at Rochefort (*Moniteur*, an. 3, No. 81, seance du 18 Frimaire), and priests are now his chief calumniators. When Bonaparte returned from the Island of Elba he excluded him from the Chamber of Peers (though he was formerly a senator), undoubtedly, because he claimed and defended the rights of the people in his eloquent little tract, "*De la Constitution Française de l'an. 1814*,"

as well as in the vote with which he opposed the constitution sent by the senate to Louis XVIII. and as a reward, the latter has now also excluded him from the number of his peers! By these events, however, Bishop Gregoire had finished, as it were, his political career, and for the last year, has been entirely absorbed in his efforts in favour of religion, humanity and letters. Why then is he again to be disturbed? His virtues, in France, it is well known, are proof against all calumnies, and in England this same character, in union with his being the friend and defender of Protestants, Anabaptists, Jews, Negroes, Mulattos, in short, of the oppressed, ought to have shielded him from the taunts and designing statements of an editor of a daily paper.—*Morn. Chron.*

*Some Account of the Rev. Dr. Lucas.*

**DR. RICHARD LUCAS** was the son of Richard Lucas, of Presteigne, in Radnorshire, and born in that county about the year 1648. After a proper foundation at school, he was sent, in 1664, to Jesus College, Oxford, where, after taking both his degrees in Arts, at the regular times, he entered into holy orders about the year 1672, and was for some time master of the free school at Abergavenny; but being much esteemed for his talents in the pulpit, he was chosen vicar of St. Stephen's, Coleman-street, London, and lecturer of St. Olave, in Southwark, in 1683. In 1691, he took the degree of Doctor in Divinity, and was installed prebendary of Westminster in 1696. His sight began to fail him in his youth, but he lost it totally about this time, and lived many years after this misfortune. He died on the 29th of June, 1715, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, but there is no stone or monument there to point out the place of his interment.

It is somewhat remarkable that so few particulars should have been preserved of the life and character of a divine of such distinguished merit. We are only told in general that he was greatly esteemed for his piety and learning; and indeed that he was a most excellent man may be justly inferred from his writings, which are exceedingly valuable, and will pre-

serve his fame to late posterity. His principal performance is, "An Inquiry after Happiness," in two volumes, octavo, which has passed through several editions, and is justly held in high estimation. He also published, 1st, "Practical Christianity, or an Account of the Holiness which the Gospel enjoins, and the Remedies it proposes against Temptations," 8vo. 2d, "The Morality of the Gospel," 3d, "Christian Thoughts for every Day in the Week." 4th, "A Guide to Heaven." 5th, "The Duty of Servants." 6th, Several Sermons, in five volumes, some of which were published by his son, who was of his own name, and survived him, and who was bred at Sidney College, Cambridge, where he took his Master of Arts degree. Dr. Lucas also translated into Latin the Whole Duty of Man, which was published in 1680, in 8vo.

*British Biography*, Vol. VI. page 122, in a Note to the Life of Mr. Howe.

Among other respectable writers, of whom we have but a very slender account, is Dr. Richard Lucas, author of several volumes of sermons, which possess considerable merit, and of an "Inquiry concerning Happiness, which has passed through, at least, eight editions. He was the son of Richard Lucas, of Presteign, in Radnorshire, and born in that county about the year 1648. In 1664, he was sent to Jesus College, Oxford; and after taking both the degrees in Arts, he entered into holy orders about the year 1672. For some time he was master of the free school at Abergavenny; but in 1683, he became vicar of St. Stephen's, Coleman-street, and was also chosen lecturer of St. Olave, in Southwark. He took the degree of Doctor in Divinity in 1691, and was installed prebendary of Westminster in 1696. About this time he lost his sight, but lived many years after that misfortune. He wrote his "Inquiry after Happiness" after he became blind, or nearly so. He was the author of several theological pieces besides those which have been already mentioned. He died in 1715, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, but no stone has been placed there to point out the place of his interment.—*Monthly Magazine.*



## ORIGINAL LETTERS.

*Two from the late Rev. R. Robinson, of Cambridge, to the late Rev. Dan Taylor, of London.*

*Chesterton, Dec. 2, 1786.*

MY DEAR SIR,

**Y**OUR favour came to hand last night at my return from Biggleswade, where, at the ordination of Mr. Bowers, I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Birley. He told me of the printing, and I desired him to inform you, with assurances of my sincere esteem, that I gave you an absolute power over my scrap. I seldom quote chapter and verse in preaching, for I have supposed it a loss of time, and a temptation to divert my attention from the *thread* of the subject in hand. Were I to follow my ideas, I should always *preach* without quoting, and always *print* with it. If therefore you will please to mark Scripture in *italics*, and put figures in the margin, as you propose, I shall be obliged to you. At the same time, allow me to say, I think your scrupulous delicacy on the subject more than was necessary in regard to any thing of mine, which, I believe, would always be improved by passing through your refining hand. Either I am mistaken, or your understanding is superior and sound.

Your zeal for the publication gives me animation, as it convinces me of your approbation of the work. Whether your opinion be what I take it for or not, certain it is, it operates in due proportion on me according to the worth I set upon it, and that is high. I have had similar encouragement from other places, but, as I propose to myself no pecuniary gain, so I shall endeavour to throw the publication into a train, which may not encumber me, and yet be reputable to the cause. My plan is to print it handsomely, that the cause of the contemptible Anabaptists may have a chance of being read by such as at present have our liberties and properties in their hands;—for to us, Baptists, the New Testament is the whole body of our divinity, and quite sufficient to confirm us in the practice. For this purpose I have thrown in anecdotes and entertainment, not necessary to the argument, though

appending to it, of which I had the pleasure, when you was here, of knowing your approbation. Ever since, I have been in the Alpine Vallies of Dauphiny, Provence, Savoy and Piedmont. Thence I was violently driven to Biggleswade, to the loss of three days time and my temper, for in the middle of my story, I was obliged to leave off, and send home my books.

Now have I got all to fumble out again. I hope, however, within two or three weeks to finish this part, and then my plan is this: I intend to revise one sheet, and print it, as a sort of specimen, and to strike off eight or ten proofs, and no more. These will be put into the hand of a friend, and along with them an estimate of the expence of one volume. This friend will divide them into shares of ten books each, and when, if ever, he hath procured subscriptions enough to pay the press, the volume will be printed. If this take place, you will hear from him. In what manner he will arrange the affair I know not. All I ask is, that the work be printed, but not hackneyed by pressing subscriptions, as no money will be wanted till the paper and press are to be paid, and then only the value of the books subscribed for. It has been supposed, that if thirty churches would take ten each, the expence would be cleared: but this cannot be determined before an estimate is made.

I am of opinion, that the work ought not to be hurried, but proceed leisurely, for new facts and new light daily rise on the subject. Ignorance, malice, political manœuvres, clerical sophistry, and party zeal have thrown together a vast pile of materials, true, false, doubtful, important, impertinent, and so on. All these are to be examined, assorted, arranged, and even lies must be disposed of, or they like vipers benumbed a while will revive and poison true historical facts. The mighty mass often discourages me, and damps my spirits, especially when I recollect how ready prepared to censure and abuse the most upright intentions some men stand—idle souls, who do nothing but gape and

grin at those who are at work. You know, my friend, this is a very obscure, a very difficult history, and the writer of it deserves mercy toward his innocent mistakes; however, he will meet with none, and he neither expects nor asks for any. They say, there are no innocent mistakes. What answer can be made?

Last night, along with your's, I received from a clergyman of my acquaintance, a perfect master of German literature, a great bulk of German history relative to the German Baptists, and an engagement to visit me in January to assist me in learning German enough to enable me to make out the records written in that tongue. I have time before me, for I query whether Germany will come up before my third volume. Spanish and Italian are nothing, for being only dialects of Latin they are easily surmountable; but high and low Dutch are ruffian-looking rogues. I am half afraid of them; but my friend, who was here a week last summer, put me in a way so that I got through the translating of one paragraph of a German work, which he had with him. If he stays a month next visit, I shall try, but with what success I know not. I have got Greece, Rome, Africa, and Navarre written fair for the press, and almost all the preliminary essays. Next week my amanuensis begins either Spain or Italy, if I can get time to revise either of them. Forgive my prolixity. You asked to know the state of the work. Accept this desultory account.

We retain on our minds with singular pleasure a recollection of your excellent discourse to us at Cambridge, and we do ask one another what the General and Particular Baptists differ about; for, say we, either Mr. Taylor is a Particular, or we are Generals.

Accept the best wishes of this family, and present them to your house.

I am, dear Sir,

Most affectionately your's,  
ROBT. ROBINSON.

*Chesterton, Feb. 21, 1789.*

MY DEAR MR. TAYLOR,

YOU may not have any concern with the subject of this letter for many years, yet I think it a duty I owe you to give you a hint of it. A friend of mine having informed me of his in-

tention to leave a considerable sum for the benefit of our poor ministers and churches, and giving me at the same time his particular views, desired me to advise and arrange the distribution of it. The leading feature in the complexion of the donor is a love of perfect religious liberty. There is, then, a trust created, and a sum, yet accumulating, provided, to enable the trustees to pay annually five pounds or more, if needed, to twenty, for certain, and it may be, if the donor lives a few years longer, thirty or forty churches. There is also a legacy of £400 to the four funds in London (for I named your fund, which my friend had not heard of, and £100 accordingly was bequeathed you), on condition the fundees give security to the executor that they will always pay the interest to one or more Protestant Dissenting ministers that shall apply, and profess to believe Jesus is the Son of God, and who shall attest by their lives the sincerity of their profession. The first £100 is to be offered on this condition to the Particular Baptist fund, and if they refuse, then the £100 bequeathed to them is to be offered to you, along with your own £100, so that £200 is contingent to you; and if you refuse, then provision is made from one to another, till the donation vests where the receivers will not be crippled with human creeds. It is very likely the first fundees will not accept money under this restriction, for one of their printed rules and orders is, that such, and such only shall receive any benefit from this fund, as profess to believe the doctrines of three divine persons, eternal and personal election, &c. It should seem there are many worthy, though poor ministers, who do not believe either the one or the other; but this condition does not prevent their believing what they approve, it only prevents future fundees from putting human creeds in the place of the gospel, and depressing the servant of Christ into a slave of his brother, a servant like himself and no more.

My neighbour, Mr. Payn, of Walden, has favoured me with "the proceedings of the General Assembly held on Wednesday, May 14th, 1788, at Worship-Street, &c." I see no human test here, and it should seem you hold really as well as professionally the sufficiency of Scripture. I intend to send it among the friends of freedom in the



University, who have, somehow or other, got hold of the book of "rules and orders of the Particular Baptist fund," and are extremely shocked at the absurdity of their conduct, the more so as they thought the Baptists were inalienable friends of the freedom of conscience. Your fund account I hope will be a corrective, and shew that all Baptists are not tyrants over their brethren. I am asked by the University several questions too hard for me to answer, as

1. Had the London Particular Baptists of 1775 the consent of their country brethren to compile a human creed for them? Most certainly they had no authority from Christ.

2. What makes Baptists so fond of the name and the creed of Calvin, seeing the barbarian burnt Servetus, and denounced the vengeance of God and the civil magistrate against all Anabaptists?

3. How is the imposition of a human creed consistent with their profession of the sufficiency of Scripture, and the sole dominion of Christ over the consciences of his disciples?

4. With what face can such men ask for the repeal of the test-acts, seeing they impose human tests upon one another?

5. Have the General Baptists offended or injured the Particulars, that they have thus excluded them from all their favours?

6. Is the belief of election a virtue, or the denial of it a sin; and is the acknowledging of persons in God any test of grace in the heart?

7. Are a people likely to improve, whose inquiries are bounded by human creeds; and is it not a strong prejudice against Calvinism that it needs such props? &c. &c.

I wish their book of rules and orders had been at the bottom of the sea rather than at Cambridge. You cannot think what disgrace it has brought upon the London Baptists. Our church behold it with astonishment, and the University say the authors were strangers to the first principles of Christian liberty. The question is not of the truth of their creed, but of the imposition of it, for such only shall receive our charity as believe as John of Geneva did. Could I subscribe a human creed I would not do it for a poor Baptist dole, I would submit to my lords the bishops, for some good thing in their rich corpora-

tion. These ecclesiastical sheriffs, appointed by the crown, play Jupiter with a better grace than our little Anabaptist tyrants. Believe what they will, but why pretend to write a creed for me? Why sap the foundation of the good old Baptists? Scripture alone is a sufficient guide for every Christian man.

Pardon, dear Mr. Taylor, my prolixity. I hated dominion over conscience, because I am clearly convinced it dishonours God, degrades man, tacitly denies the perfection of the divine word, dethrones the King of saints, and introduces all manner of wicked passions among Christians, withdrawing them from the example of the mild and merciful Master, and imparting to them the contentious and cruel dispositions of bigots. They have turned the gospel into a miserable system of metaphysics; and to define natures, not to observe facts, is instead of talents natural and acquired, instead of good sense, exact reason, and often, instead of virtue itself. This depression lies upon all human systems, when they are made the tests of Christians.

My wife, who sits by, asks how people found the way to heaven before Calvin and Van Harmin were born? I answer, by the light of Scripture alone. Then, adds she, I shall content myself with my New Testament, and leave the great Latin folios to your friend Taylor and you. I reply, you may very safely, and we shall debate our points with as little gall as if the inquiry were which of us could most dexterously jump over a five-barred gate.

If you think proper to write to me, you may give your letter to my daughter, or ask her for a frank. She is the wife of a Mr. Brown, wine-merchant, No. 2, Love Lane, Little Eastcheap, where, I am sure, she will be glad to see you, and where probably Mrs. R. and I may have the pleasure of seeing you some time or other. My dutiful respects to Father Britain, and to your whole family.

I am, dear Sir,

Ever your's most affectionately,

ROBT. ROBINSON.

By the way, my friend may alter his will, you will recollect, and then all the former part of my letter is nothing. Is not Mr. Winchester in your connection? His book, on the restoration of all things, is in the University library, and thence I had it to read. His ac-

count of the American German Baptists, pp. 143, 144, is very just, except that his printer has misprinted one letter. Their American name is *Tunkers*, from the German verb, *tuncken*, to dip, not *Dunkers*, as the printer has put it. They are the true old original Baptists of the dark ages. The sufficiency of Scripture is their foundation truth, and having no human creeds they have no quarrels. Their mode of administering baptism resembles that of some Eastern churches.

They use *trine* immersion, and the person baptized receives the ordinance kneeling in the water. They are right in immersing, right in bowing the candidate for baptism forward, and wrong (I think) in causing him to kneel, and in repeating the immersion thrice. I suspect they were originally Trinitarians, by this, yet this is not certain, for the Unitarian Baptists of Spain in early times used *trine* immersion.

Once more, peace be with you!

## EXTRACTS.

### *Letters of Dr. Franklin's.*

[From his "*Private Correspondence*, now first published from the Originals, by his Grandson, William Temple Franklin," in one Volume 4to. Printed for Colburn, 1817.]

TO GEORGE WHITEFIELD.\*

SIR, Philadelphia, June 6, 1753.

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 2d instant, and am glad to hear that you increase in strength; I hope you will continue mending till you recover your former health and firmness. Let me know whether you still use the cold bath, and what effect it has.

As to the kindness you mention, I wish it could have been of more service to you. But if it had, the only thanks I should desire is, that you would always be equally ready to serve any other person that may need your assistance, and so let good offices go round; for mankind are all of a family.

For my own part, when I am employed in serving others, I do not look upon myself as conferring favours, but as paying debts. In my travels, and since my settlement, I have received much kindness from men, to whom I shall never have any opportunity of making the least direct return; and numberless mercies from God, who is infinitely above being benefited by our services. Those kindnesses from men, I can therefore only return on their fellow men, and I can only shew my gratitude for these mercies from God, by a

readiness to help his other children, and my brethren. For I do not think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, can discharge our real obligations to each other, and much less those to our Creator. You will see in this my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting to merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree, and eternal in duration: I can do nothing to deserve such rewards. He that for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person, should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands, compared with those who think they deserve heaven for the little good they do on earth. Even the mixed imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world, are rather from God's goodness than our merit: how much more such happiness of heaven! For my part, I have not the vanity to think I deserve it, the folly to expect it, nor the ambition to desire it; but content myself in submitting to the will and disposal of that God who made me, who has hitherto preserved and blessed me, and in whose fatherly goodness I may well confide, that he will never make me miserable; and that even the afflictions I may at any time suffer shall tend to my benefit.

The faith you mention has certainly its use in the world: I do not desire to see it diminished, nor would I endeavour to lessen it in any man. But I wish it were more productive of good works, than I have generally seen it: I mean real good works; works of kindness, charity, mercy, and public spirit; not holiday-

\* One of the founders of the Methodists; born at Gloucester, 1714, died in New England, 1770.



keeping, sermon-reading, or hearing; performing church ceremonies, or making long prayers, filled with flatteries and compliments, despised even by wise men, and much less capable of pleasing the Deity. The worship of God is a duty; the hearing and reading of sermons may be useful; but if men rest in hearing and praying, as too many do, it is as if a tree should value itself on being watered and putting forth leaves, though it never produced any fruit.

Your great master thought much less of these outward appearances and professions, than many of his modern disciples. He preferred the *doers* of the word to the mere *hearers*; the son that seemingly refused to obey his father, and yet performed his commands, to him that professed his readiness but neglected the work; the heretical but charitable Samaritan, to the uncharitable though orthodox priest, and sanctified Levite; and those who gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, raiment to the naked, entertainment to the stranger, and relief to the sick, though they never heard of his name, he declares shall in the last day be accepted; when those who cry Lord! Lord! who value themselves upon their faith, though great enough to perform miracles, but have neglected good works, shall be rejected. He professed that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; which implied his modest opinion that there were some in his time who thought themselves so good that they need not hear even him for improvement; but now-a-days we have scarce a little parson that does not think it the duty of every man within his reach to sit under his petty ministrations; and that whoever omits them, offends God. I wish to such more humility, and to you health and happiness; being

Your friend and servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO DR. PRIESTLEY.

London, September 19, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

IN the affair of so much importance to you, wherein you ask my advice; I cannot for want of sufficient premises, counsel you *what* to determine; but if you please, I will tell you *how*. When those difficult cases

occur, they are difficult chiefly because, while we have them under consideration, all the reasons *pro* and *con*, are not present to the mind at the same time; but sometimes one set present themselves; and at other times another, the first being out of sight. Hence the various purposes or inclinations that alternately prevail, and the uncertainty that perplexes us. To get over this, my way is, to divide half a sheet of paper by a line into two columns; writing over the one *pro*, and over the other *con*: then during three or four days consideration, I put down under the different heads, short hints of the different motives that at different times occur to me, *for* or *against* the measure. When I have thus got them all together in one view, I endeavour to estimate their respective weights, and where I find two, (one on each side) that seem equal, I strike them both out. If I find a reason *pro* equal to some *two* reasons *con*, I strike out the *three*. If I judge some *two* reasons *con*, equal to some *three* reasons *pro*, I strike out the *five*; and thus proceeding I find at length where the *balance* lies; and if after a day or two of farther consideration, nothing new that is of importance occurs on either side, I come to a determination accordingly. And though the weight of reasons cannot be taken with the precision of algebraic quantities; yet, when each is thus considered separately and comparatively, and the whole lies before me, I think I can judge better, and am less liable to make a rash step; and in fact I have found great advantage from this kind of equation, in what may be called *moral* or *prudential algebra*.

Wishing sincerely that you may determine for the best, I am ever, my dear friend,

Your's most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO DR. PRICE, LONDON.

Passy, February 6, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED but very lately your kind favour of October 14th. Dr. Ingenhousz, who brought it, having staid long in Holland. I sent the enclosed directly to Mr. L. It gave me great pleasure to understand that you continue well. Your writings, after all the abuse you and they

have met with, begin to make serious impressions on those who at first rejected the counsels you gave; and they will acquire new weight every day, and be in high esteem when the cavils against them are dead and forgotten. Please to present my affectionate respects to that honest, sensible, and intelligent society,\* who did me so long the honour of admitting me to share in their instructive conversations. I never think of the hours I so happily spent in that company, without regretting that they are never to be repeated; for I see no prospect of an end to this unhappy war in my time. Dr. Priestley, you tell me, continues his experiments with success. We make daily great improvements in *natural*—There is one I wish to see in *moral* Philosophy; the discovery of a plan that would induce and oblige nations to settle their disputes without first cutting one another's throats. When will human reason be sufficiently improved to see the advantage of this? When will men be convinced that even successful wars at length become misfortunes to those who unjustly commenced them, and who triumphed blindly in their success, not seeing all its consequences. Your great comfort and mine in this war is, that we honestly and faithfully did every thing in our power to prevent it. Adieu, and believe me ever, my dear friend, your's, &c.

B. F.

To DR. PRIESTLEY.

*Passy, February 8, 1780.*

DEAR SIR,

YOUR kind letter of September 27th, came to hand but very lately, the bearer having staid long in Holland.

I always rejoice to hear of your being still employed in experimental researches into nature, and of the success you meet with. The rapid progress *true* science now makes, occasions my regretting sometimes that I was born so soon: it is impossible to imagine the height to which may be carried in a thousand years, the power of man over matter; we may perhaps learn to deprive large masses of their gravity, and give them

\* Supposed to allude to a club at the London Coffee-house.

absolute levity, for the sake of easy transport. Agriculture may diminish its labour and double its produce: all diseases may by sure means be prevented or cured, (not excepting even that of old age) and our lives lengthened at pleasure even beyond the antediluvian standard. O that moral science were in as fair a way of improvement, that men would cease to be wolves to one another, and that human beings would at length learn what they now improperly call humanity!

I am glad my little paper on the *Aurora Borealis* pleased. If it should occasion farther inquiry, and so produce a better hypothesis, it will not be wholly useless.

I am ever, with the greatest and most sincere esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. F.

[*Inclosed in the foregoing Letter; being an answer to a separate paper received from Dr. Priestley.*]

I have considered the situation of that person very attentively; I think that with a little help from the *Moral Algebra*, he might form a better judgment than any other person can form for him. But since my opinion seems to be desired, I give it for continuing to the end of the term, under all the present disagreeable circumstances: the connection will then die a natural death. No reason will be expected to be given for the separation, and of course no offence taken at reasons given; the friendship may still subsist, and in some other way be useful. The time diminishes daily, and is usefully employed. All human situations have their inconveniences; we *feel* those that we find in the present, and we neither *feel* nor *see* those that exist in another. Hence we make frequent and troublesome changes without amendment, and often for the worse. In my youth I was passenger in a little sloop, descending the River Delaware. There being no wind, we were obliged when the ebb was spent, to cast anchor, and wait for the next. The heat of the sun on the vessel was excessive, the company strangers to me, and not very agreeable. Near the river side I saw what I took to be a pleasant green meadow, in the middle of which was a large shady tree, where it struck my fancy



I could sit and read, (having a book in my pocket) and pass the time agreeably till the tide turned; I therefore prevailed with the captain to put me ashore. Being landed, I found the greatest part of my meadow was really a marsh, in crossing which, to come at my tree, I was up to my knees in mire: and I had not placed myself under its shade five minutes before the muskitoes in swarms found me out, attacked my legs, hands, and face, and made my reading and my rest impossible; so that I returned to the beach, and called for the boat to come and take me on board again, where I was obliged to bear the heat I had strove to quit, and also the laugh of the company. Similar cases in the affairs of life have since frequently fallen under my observation.

I have had thoughts of a college for him in America; I know no one who might be more useful to the public in the institution of youth. But there are possible unpleasantnesses in that situation: it cannot be obtained but by a too hazardous voyage at this time for a family: and the time for experiments would be all otherwise engaged.

TO DOCTOR PRICE.

*Passy, October 9, 1780.*

DEAR SIR,

BESIDES the pleasure of their company, I had the great satisfaction of hearing by your two valuable friends, and learning from your letter, that you enjoy a good state of health. May God continue it as well for the good of mankind as for your comfort. I thank you much for the second edition of your excellent pamphlet: I forwarded that you sent to Mr. Dana, he being in Holland. I wish also to see the piece you have written, (as Mr. Jones tells me) on toleration: I do not expect that your new parliament will be either wiser or honester than the last. All projects to procure an honest one, by place bills, &c. appear to me vain and impracticable. The true cure I imagine is to be found only in rendering all places unprofitable, and the king too poor to give bribes and pensions. Till this is done, which can only be by a revolution, and I think you have not virtue enough left to procure one, your nation will always be plundered; and obliged to pay by taxes the plun-

derers for plundering and ruining. Liberty and virtue therefore join in the call COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE! I am fully of your opinion respecting religious tests; but though the people of Massachusetts have not in their new constitution kept quite clear of them; yet if we consider what that people were one hundred years ago, we must allow they have gone greater lengths in liberality of sentiment, on religious subjects; and we may hope for greater degrees of perfection when their constitution some years hence shall be revised. If Christian preachers had continued to teach as Christ and his apostles did, without salaries, and as the Quakers now do, I imagine tests would never have existed: for I think they were invented not so much to secure religion itself, as the emoluments of it. When a religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and when it cannot support itself, and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are obliged to call for the help of the civil power, 'tis a sign I apprehend, of its being a bad one. But I shall be out of my depth if I wade any deeper in theology, and I will not trouble you with politics, nor with news, which are almost as uncertain: but conclude with a heartfelt wish to embrace you once more, and enjoy your sweet society in peace, among our honest, worthy, ingenious friends at the *London*.

Adieu, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM A LETTER TO PRESIDENT STILES.

*Philadelphia, March 9, 1790.*

— You desire to know something of my religion. It is the first time I have been questioned upon it. But I cannot take your curiosity amiss, and shall endeavour in a few words to gratify it. Here is my creed: I believe in One God, the Creator of the universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental points in all sound religion, and I

regard them as you do in whatever sect I meet with them. As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the system of morals and his religion as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is like to see; but I apprehend it has received various corrupting changes, and I have with most of the present Dissenters in England, some doubts as to his divinity; though it is a question I do not dogmatise upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble. I see no harm however in its being believed, if that belief has the good consequence, as probably it has, of making his doctrines more respected and more observed, especially as I do not perceive that the Supreme takes it amiss, by distinguishing the believers, in his government of the world, with any peculiar marks of his displeasure. I shall only add respecting myself, that having experienced the goodness of that Being in conducting me prosperously through a long life, I have no doubt of its continuance in the next, though without the smallest conceit of meriting such goodness. My sentiments on this head you will see in the copy of an old letter inclosed,\* which I wrote in answer to one from an old religionist whom I had relieved in a paralytic case by electricity, and who being afraid I should grow proud upon it, sent me his serious, though rather impertinent caution. I send you also the copy of another letter,† which will shew something of my disposition relating to religion.

With great and sincere esteem and affection, I am, &c.

P. S. Had not your College some present of books from the King of France. Please to let me know if you had an expectation given you of more, and the nature of that expectation? I have a reason for the inquiry.

I confide that you will not expose me to criticisms and censures by publishing any part of this communi-

cation to you. I have ever let others enjoy their religious sentiments without reflecting on them for those that appeared to me unsupportable or even absurd. All sects here, and we have a great variety, have experienced my good will in assisting them with subscriptions for the building their new places of worship; and as I have never opposed any of their doctrines, I hope to go out of the world in peace with them all.

To \* \* \*

DEAR SIR, (Without date).

I HAVE read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument it contains against a particular Providence, though you allow a general Providence, you strike at the foundations of all religion. For without the belief of a Providence that takes cognizance of guards and guides, and may favour particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear its displeasure, or to pray for its protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles, though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my opinion, that though your reasonings are subtle, and may prevail with some readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject, and the consequence of printing this piece will be, a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face. But were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous life without the assistance afforded by religion; you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice, and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common temptations. But think how great a portion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced inconsiderate youth of both sexes, who have need of the motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great point for its security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is to your religious

\* Supposed to be the Letter to George Whitefield, dated June 6, 1753.

† Uncertain: perhaps the following



education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our most distinguished authors. For among us it is not necessary as among the Hottentots, that a youth to be raised into the company of men should prove his manhood by beating his mother. I would advise you therefore not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but

to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person, whereby you will save yourself a great deal of mortification from the enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of regret and repentance. If men are so wicked *with religion*, what would they be if *without it*? I intend this letter itself as a *proof* of my friendship, and therefore add no professions to it; but subscribe simply your's,

B. FRANKLIN.

## MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

*An Examination of Mr. Hume's  
Objection to Miracles.*

MR. HUME, in his celebrated Essay, Note K, defines a miracle "A transgression of a law of nature, by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of an Invisible Agent." This Essay, to use his own words, is designed to show "That no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous, than the fact which it endeavours to establish: and even, in that case, there is a mutual destruction of arguments, and the superior only gives us an assurance suitable to that degree of force which remains after deducting the inferior."

In the above quotation, Mr. Hume assumes the utter incapacity of testimony to prove a miracle. That the assumption is specious, will not be denied: and unhappily, considerable numbers have been imposed upon by it. In reality, however, a more gratuitous one hath never been made, as will be fully exemplified by an investigation of the grounds upon which he has attempted to defend it. The corner-stone of his building is another assumption of a still more extraordinary nature, but which, *if correct*, would undoubtedly silence all opposers, namely, that a greater miracle must be wrought to prove the existence of a lesser one,\* or in other words, that a miracle is the only criterion

by which to prove or judge of the existence of miracles. The credit due to them, it is admitted, rests entirely upon testimony; but the specious objection to it, from the supposed *incompetency* of human testimony, is invalid, and at most a mere begging of the question. Nevertheless, it must be remembered, that the failure of an ingenious sophister to prove a negative by no means establishes the converse, an affirmative. On the present occasion, therefore, it will not be irrelevant, and, perhaps, the *only* satisfactory reply to an objection of this sort, not merely to silence the negation, but also to attempt upon adequate evidence to substantiate the affirmative. (The minor support attempted to be derived from the subsequent sophisms contained in the Essay, such as the notion of an hypothetical array of conflicting testimonies, the want of an *uniform* experience, &c. &c. will in due time be adverted to, but not much enlarged upon, volumes having already been ably written, amply refuting them.)

My first and principal endeavour, then, will be to ascertain and prove the *competency* of human testimony, to establish and record the existence of any fact, whether of an ordinary or extraordinary kind, even although it were "A transgression of a law of nature, by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of an Invisible Agent," which is Mr. Hume's definition of a miracle.

"The evidence, that the course of nature has been departed from, is the very same by which we judge when it is not departed from, and must be equally competent in both cases. For

\* "If the falsehood of his testimony would be *more miraculous* than the event which he relates, then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion."—ESSAY.

certainly the eyes, ears and other senses of men are equally capable of judging concerning all things, which they are equally capable of perceiving."

All miracles are facts, of a nature cognizable by the ordinary faculties and suited to the common apprehension of mankind: indeed if they were not so, to no purpose would they have been performed. Those recorded in the Christian Scriptures have a peculiar efficacy in this view, since they do not depend upon *à priori* arguments and recondite speculations for proof; but uniformly referring to plain facts, and addressed to the common sense of mankind, the most illiterate as well as the most learned could equally judge of their truth. Like other *facts*, therefore, which are not miraculous, they may be established by testimony, the persons recording them affirming only the experience of their own senses, and that of others, in a plain and simple case, namely, that certain effects were repeatedly produced in the presence of considerable numbers, and of which, too, they themselves had a *personal* knowledge.

Mr. Hume, in Note K of his Essay, informs us, "That a miracle may be discoverable by man or not; this alters not its nature and essence." A more positive admission of the *existence* of miracles could not have been made, since whatever has a nature and essence must necessarily exist. And that a miracle is discoverable by man, Mr. Hume has furnished us undeniable evidence in his own example; for if not so, how could he have known, and affirmed of it, that its nature and essence would not have been altered by the circumstances alluded to in the quotation? That a miracle is in itself possible, and capable of being proved by the senses, is certain; and farther, that it may also be satisfactorily proved to others by *testimony*, Mr. Hume acknowledges when he remarks, that our observation of the *veracity* of human testimony constrains our assent to the belief of ordinary facts, even although they have never immediately fallen under the cognizance of our own senses. Just so is it with miracles, which, although undoubtedly facts of an extraordinary nature, are not on that account the less discoverable by us, when, as in the case of ordinary facts, they have been submitted to our im-

mediate and personal observation, *or to that of others*, who have recorded them to us. To assert, then, that a fact cannot be proved, when already admitted to have been fully proved, is an absolute contradiction, the very absurdity charged upon the abettors of miracles. A miracle, then, we must admit, in the first instance, is capable of being proved by the senses; and the subsequent establishment of its proof by testimony is no contradiction: indeed, *why* its being registered and recorded as a testimony of its truth to others should alter its nature, and as it were by enchantment annihilate its previous capacity of proof, a wiser head than even Mr. Hume's is requisite to determine. It must be conceded, however, that the *veracity* of testimony is not uniform; and here it is that we meet the difficulty in its fullest force, and freely admit that miracles require a stronger testimony than common facts, *but deny that the nature and capacity of testimony is on that account any ways altered or impaired*, which by the objector is strenuously contended to be the case. Had he confined himself to this single point, his objection would have had considerable weight, though it would by no means have been insuperable; but by blending with it the utter incapacity of testimony to prove at all, he has effectually defeated his own purpose. *A testimony that proves nothing cannot lie.*

*A more than reiterated experience* in proof of miracles is not wanting. If all occurrences, and *all* must be comprehended under the idea of an *uniform* experience, were to be brought about by means of particular interpositions (which is the notion of a miracle), every practical benefit to result from them would be lost, and to *us* they would no longer be miracles: *an unceasing series* of miraculous interventions would in effect be the same as *an established law*. The efficacy of a reasonable experience in judging of them is not denied: but the futility and unreasonableness of an *uniform experience* is manifest. Moreover, our *competency* to judge of the existence of any fact, whether of an ordinary or of an extraordinary nature, does not depend upon its *constant recurrence*, nor is it altered by our ignorance of what produced it; since the *mode* in which the operation of the usual course of the laws of na-



ture is effected equally with the supposed deviation from or transgression of them (the case of miracles) is unknown to us.

The supposition supported by Mr. Hume of an array of antagonists or opposite proofs between miracles, and testimony as the criterion of them, is so weak and untrue, as to be really unworthy of him. Wherein is exemplified any mutual destruction of arguments? Does the liability to falsehood in testimony, annul or impede its *capacity* to record truth, even although that truth be of a miraculous nature? Certainly not; both the concessions in the Essay, and numerous other *more* powerful considerations herein adduced, prove it beyond doubt. Is testimony any other than the *record of experience*? "the criterion of facts which do not fall immediately under our own observation." What, then, can be more absurd than to oppose the *record of positive experience* to the *absence* of an uniform and personal one, or to the liability to error in testimony, designed or undesigned, especially in a case of this kind, where multitudes of living witnesses could have contradicted it? At the time the miracles are recorded to have been performed, they were never denied; the *Power only* by which they were accomplished was ever called in question. Human nature, too, having been fully admitted to be the same in all ages, the persons living in those days were *equally competent* with ourselves, not only to ascertain the facts, but also to record to others the *experience of their senses*: and surely nothing more either has been done, or is wanting to be done, to establish the proof of miracles, since this is the *test* by which we can alone know them: but such are the minor sophisms adduced in corroboration of this celebrated objection, and maintained to be indispensable by their author.

Much stress has been laid by Mr. Hume and others on the natural improbability of miracles, but with little reason. Were it a question of probability only (which, however, it certainly is not), the *balance* of records in which they are noticed affirming their truth, and the *preponderance* of veracity in human testimony having been conceded in the Essay, the evidence in their favour, even on this ground, is

decisive. By the addition of a single ounce to a pair of well poised, though ordinary scales, you will turn them as completely, and more commodiously too, than by that of a pound; but the addition of hundreds or thousands of ounces, at *once*, to a pair of *sceptical* scales, would produce no other effect than that I am acquainted with, than the *breaking* of them: and well would it be for the experimentalist, if he were not materially injured in the general wreck. *Improbability*, moreover, has no relation to testimony, but only to *opinion*: where testimony begins, improbability ends. To give testimony to any event, supposes that we have already ascertained the fact, either directly, by the observation of our own senses, or indirectly, through the medium of the senses of others. In either case, *improbability* is wholly out of the question.

The consideration that the *subsequent* effects in the Christian world can be accounted for on no other principle, than upon the supposition of the truth of the miracles, with the *important* end to be answered by them, are arguments that have justly made a forcible impression on numbers. Some have denied experience to be the sole foundation on which to ground our belief in testimony: others, in answer to the objection that miracles are not wrought in our days, have replied to it by saying that they are no longer necessary; information now abounds in the world; mankind are of *themselves* sufficiently inclined to examine the records of immortality; a *præternatural stimulus* is no longer wanting; and the Almighty cannot be expected to resort to extraordinary means while ordinary ones are fully adequate; *a priori* considerations have actuated the researches of a few, who have directed their principal efforts to ascertain the *abstract nature* of miracles, rather than the subsequent establishment of their proofs. The sum total, however, of these united observations, seem to me to tend more to the refutation of the *minor* difficulties of the case, than to the subversion of the principal one: and one, more specious than Mr. Hume's, will, I apprehend, be easily admitted to have never been made.

The *capacity of testimony* to record truth, even although that truth be of a miraculous nature, can no longer be

denied—the futility of its *supposed incompetency* having, it is presumed, been fully ascertained. I have directed my observations more immediately to this point of the objection, *the nature and capacity of testimony*, because it is the point which appears to me to be the principal one, and in most of the answers given, to have been the least attended to.

#### A BELIEVER IN MIRACLES.

*Genealogy of Jesus and Joseph.*

*Gosport, Jan. 2, 1817.*

**K**ING JAMES's translators English this verse thus:

"And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli."

The Improved Version, for "as was supposed," reads, "as was allowed by law."

It is not the present writer's design to enter into the dispute concerning the disagreements between the genealogy of Matthew and that of Luke; neither is it of very material importance to his argument whether we read "supposed" or "allowed by law to be the son of Joseph," he being well persuaded that those words in the parenthesis were *not intended* by the Evangelist to describe Jesus, but his father Joseph, and that the passage originally stood:

"And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being the son of Joseph, who was supposed to be (or allowed by law to be) the son of Heli."

From Dr. Priestley's Harmony of the Gospels (Sect. II. Notes), I find that "according to Eusebius, it was a tradition in the family of Joseph, that he was properly the *legal son* of Heli, who, dying without children, his brother Jacob married his wife, and having a child by her, it was transferred to Heli."

The only use which Dr. P. makes of the citation, is to account for the difference in the genealogies—Matthew stating that Jacob begat Joseph, and Luke that "Joseph" was "the son of Heli."

Whether at the time he published the Harmony, the Doctor believed the miraculous conception or not, is less apparent than might be wished in the notes to that work; and I have no other books at hand which will throw

light upon the subject. From the latter cause, too, I cannot discover whether my conjecture be new, but I have certainly never heard of it before. My reasons for believing it well-founded, are, that we have no ground to imagine that any doubts existed in the time of our Lord with regard to his being the son of Joseph by natural generation, and therefore no cause for the Evangelist's writing the words "as was supposed," after the name of Jesus; whereas there is a manifest propriety in their being appended to that of Joseph, who was *not* the son of Heli by *natural generation*, but (if the tradition of Eusebius be correct, and I know not how, without admitting it, to reconcile the genealogies) by legal transfer only—Jacob having "raised up seed to his brother."

Could it be proved that by accident or design these words had been transposed by a copyist from their original situation (which, perhaps, may be done, or at least the *presumption strengthened*, by some of your ingenious and learned correspondents), the believers in the miraculous conception would have one argument the less in defence of their hypothesis.

I should be happy to see the discussion taken up.

J. READ.

*Narrative of a celebrated Auto de Fé in the City of Logrono.*

[Continued from Vol. XI. pp. 576 and 658.]

**T**HE inquisitors state that the following ceremonies take place on the installation of a witch:—

The witch, who persuades any persons to become noviciates, first anoints them with a fœtid, greenish liquid, and then takes them rapidly through the air to the *Aquelarre*, where they are received by the devil on his throne. They there renounce God, the virgin, all the saints and sacraments, and on their knees they kiss various parts of the devil's body, and acknowledge him for their God and Lord; after which his infernal majesty makes a wound in their flesh with his nail, and with a liquid like gold marks the apple of their eye, by which mark the witches recognize one another. Though the pain from the former operation is excessive, the place wounded soon becomes senseless, and the inquisitors



say that having discovered the places scratched by the devil, they drove pins into them till their heads were buried, yet the witches felt or seemed to feel no pain. An imp is then selected for each noviciate, which is fostered and fed by the old witches, till it is thought proper to entrust it to the care of the newly installed. The whole assembly then dance amidst flames of fictitious fire to the sound of timbrels, tambourines and flutes (the musicians of the Zugarramurdi Aquelarre were among the witnesses under our commission, and were reconciled in consequence of their disclosures), and the devil assures them these are the flames of hell, and encourages them to every sort of evil, promising them that hell-fire shall no more scorch them than this unreal blaze. At cock-crowing they all disperse, each accompanied by his familiar (or imp), and fly through the air to their individual homes.

On Aquelarre nights the noviciates are employed in guarding a flock of imps (in the form of toads), which furnish the witches with poisons and ointments for their various diabolical purposes, and become the agents of their misdeeds. These imps are endowed with the gift of speech, and are clad in fine cloth and velvet. Some of the witches confessed, that they had nursed their imps with the greatest tenderness, had made them their constant companions, and these, in return, had watched over them both sleeping and waking, and been to them like guardian angels.

Juanes de Echalar (the minister of justice in our Aquelarre) declared, and his testimony was confirmed by many others, that if any witch absented herself from the assembly, or in any way infringed on the laws of witchcraft, he was accustomed to scourge the offender with thongs and thorns, till blood streamed from the wounds, when the devil himself applied ointment to the sores, and treated the sufferers with such extraordinary care and tenderness, that the marks were almost immediately removed.

The reconciled witches stated, that one of the amusements of the Aquelarre was to sally forth (in the shapes of different animals) to way-lay and frighten passengers, selecting those especially, who neglect to say grace before and after meat. This testimony was corroborated by a host of evidence from

individuals, who had been hurried almost to death by sundry apparitions, and whose accounts agreed with those of the witches.

The name of Jesus, however, (the inquisitors say they ascertained) is sufficient to dissolve every charm of witchcraft; and they report many instances of the wonderful effects of the ejaculation "Jesus!"—Scores of witches dispersed in a moment—tempests calmed—invisible spirits made manifest, and many other miracles.

On the vespers of certain saints' days a solemn act of adoration to the devil is performed in the Aquelarre. The witches then make a confession of their virtues (instead of their sins), and are reprehended gravely on account of them. All the apparatus of mass is introduced in mockery (black, moreover, dirty and ugly), and the devil reads an address from his own missal, and afterwards gives a sermon on the advantages of atheism and immorality. All the company then prostrate themselves at his feet, each presenting some offering, which is received by evil spirits who are in attendance, and who always take part in the more important ceremonies. The administration of the sacrament is next turned into ridicule, by a burlesque, in which a piece of shoe-leather represents the consecrated wafer; and when these services are over, they proceed to every species of infamous crime.

Miguel de Goyburu (oldest wizard and king of the Aquelarre) testified (and he was borne out by other evidence), that the senior witches greatly enjoy visiting church-yards, disinterring the dead, and stealing their brains, cartilages, and other parts of the body. To light them while thus employed, they use a torch made of the arm of an unbaptized child, the fingers being kindled, and this torch (they continue) has the singular property of illuminating the witches, while it remains invisible to all other human beings. The collected spoils are presented to the devil, who devours them greedily, encouraging the witches to do the same.

In the autumnal season, the most privileged of the witches receive the visits of the devil and his imps, who accompany them to fields and dark caves, where they instruct them how to prepare poisonous ointments, from various venomous animals, which they amalgamate with human brains and bones. With these poisons they be-

witch and destroy their enemies, carry pestilence into their flocks, and blight their fruits. "More than twenty murders, damages, and acts of vengeance," were proved against one poor wretch who suffered under our commission. Evidence was also given of the deaths of many children who had been the victims of witchcraft: the blood of some had been sucked; others had been hanged; others had been scourged with brambles to death; and many had been destroyed by the poisonous pills. After many details of this character, the inquisitors break off and say, "The number of these murders is so great, that it is impossible to go into the particulars of all."

In the course of their inquiries, the inquisitors obtained information of an *Aquelarre* of more than five hundred witches; but it seems they were unsuccessful in their attempt to convict them.

What precedes is a very imperfect and abbreviated account of the discoveries and proceedings of the *Logrono* inquisitors. Many disgusting details are omitted, but enough are given to show the gross barbarism and credulity of a tribunal which professed to justify the character of God, and to purify religion from all its errors.

The establishment of the inquisition in Spain seems to have been the prelude to the gradual decline of that "renowned, romantic land." The most enlightened writers, (and especially *Hernando de Pulgar*) opposed the introduction of this merciless tribunal with energy and eloquence. More than twenty thousand persons were marked out for its prey, immediately after its establishment; of whom two thousand were burnt, and about the same number, condemned to death, fled to the mountains, and escaped, as they were able, from their country.

In 1492, the barbarous decree was issued, which drove nearly half a million of Jews from the Peninsula, who took with them immense treasures, and whose removal almost crushed the rising spirit of literature in Spain, for among them were some of the ablest philosophers and most intelligent critics.\*

\* And their talents descended to their children. *Spinoza*, *Monteira* (whose shrewd objections against Christianity were

In 1559, the inquisitor general published the first list of prohibited books. Among these the New Testament is mentioned; the prohibition of which was repeated in 1583. Such is the growth of superstition, when ministered to by ignorance and sheltered by power, that soon after this period a noted Jesuit (*Martin del Rio*) wrote to prove (aye, and quotes authorities too) that Luther was the carnal son of the devil, who in the form of a goat seduced his mother—and that all heretics are magicians, calmly recommending that they may be brought to the torture, which he supposes would make them confess the fact.

It would be an useful, it might even be an interesting object, to trace the influence of ecclesiastical tyranny on the literature, the civil rights, the happiness of a nation, which has gradually sunk from the summit of political influence, and power and pride, into a state of moral, mental, and political degradation.

B.

SIR, *Bath, Dec. 6, 1816.*

I BEG leave to transmit to you an extract from a sermon preached at *Lurgan*, in Ireland, before a body of Dissenting ministers, by *Andrew Alexander*, of *Urney*. The subject was the universal progress of the gospel—the text *Isaiah xi. 9.*

After the author had illustrated the doctrine, he then proceeds to consider the causes which prevent its immediate accomplishment; and, first he considers the prejudices of education. He says, it is very natural to think, that whatever opinions get first hold of the mind, will take the deepest root; they grow up with its growth, and strengthen with its strength. They are generally received from parents or masters, whom young persons are inclinable to treat with great deference and respect; and it may be they are patronized by great names, for some particular accomplishments highly reputable. These circumstances are all apt to conspire in rendering the bulk of mankind extremely tenacious of such sentiments, and very unwilling to admit

answered by our *Anthony Collins*), *Castro*, *Pinedo*, and other famous Hebraists, were descendants of the Portuguese and Spanish expatriated Jews.



any thing that opposes or condemns them. By this means they are converted into prejudices, those pernicious weeds of the mind, that choke every fair plant of reason and truth; and as religious prejudices are of all others the most inveterate and incurable, men are disposed to regard religious matters as in themselves so sacred, that, whenever attempts are made to remove any mistake that bears this hallowed stamp, they instantly take the alarm, as if their dearest and most valuable interests were in danger of being torn from them. They cannot patiently hear any of their religious tenets treated as erroneous, much less calmly attend to or consider maturely and impartially what may be advanced against them. This was remarkably the case when Christianity was at first published, though attended with the most striking proofs of a Divine Power interposing in its favour. By the strength of prepossession, it became to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness. Nay, where the gospel has been long received and professed, there have been and still may be prejudices early imbibed, very unfavourable to that improvement in the knowledge of God and religion, which we have reason to hope for, from the improvement of the capacities of human nature, from the advancing state of society, and from the spirit of wisdom speaking in the mouths of all the prophets. It is generally allowed that the power of prejudice is very conspicuous in the professed members of the Roman church, and that it has been in all ages the grand obstruction to a more thorough and perfect reformation. But, if we examine how matters stand among the reformed, it will be found that each of the parties into which they are unhappily divided, hath (in) its own prepossessions, more or less unfriendly to that growth in grace, and in the knowledge of their common Lord, to promote which is the great design of the gospel. As no sect of Protestants will have the confidence to pretend, that all its partisans are either infallible or impeccable, Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile, it is surely incumbent on all carefully to examine the system of their religious belief, that they may discover whatever it contains that may disqualify them for higher im-

provements; to guard against every bias, that may give them advice for or pleasure in one side of the question more than another, and to keep the mind like a just balance, ever ready to be weighed down by the appearance of truth, and to allow the clearest and strongest evidence from time to time to preponderate, as any addition may be made to either side. In proportion as this temper prevails, we shall be ready to hear and to receive instruction, to examine, alter, or lay aside our opinions, and allow due force to every thing that can be proposed; and thus shall we, as the happy consequence of enjoying the gospel, be filled with wisdom and spiritual understanding, become fruitful in every work, and daily increase in the knowledge of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The author goes on, 2dly, to shew, the obstruction to the increase of religious knowledge, arising from impurity of heart and life, the prevalence of those sinful lusts that war against the soul; 3dly, to the growth of religious knowledge, from the injudicious and unfair representations that have been frequently made of religion and especially of Christianity; and, lastly, the exercise of that power claimed by Christians of almost every class, of prescribing in the most sacred matters to all within the reach of their influence, and of reducing them to an uniformity of sentiments with their respective leaders, whether civil or ecclesiastical. I have not room to introduce either of these articles, though they are well worthy of our notice.

W. H.

*Thoughts on Missionary Societies.*

Nov. 25, 1816.

“JESUS CHRIST is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also, for those, *ὅλη τῆ κόσμῳ*, of the whole world.” 1 John ii. 2. That is, the benefits arising from the life and death of Christ, to those who are duly disposed and qualified to receive them (however we may differ as to their mode of operation in the gospel scheme), are not confined to those places where he is preached, but extend to all the generations of Adam, past, present, and to come. Richard Baxter, in his treatise on “Universal Redemption,”

hath employed fifty seven propositions, and sixty explanatory theses, in illustration of this glorious and important truth, which St. John hath clearly and emphatically expressed in three sentences! It hath been said of this eminent divine, that he was "unhappily subtle and metaphysical in every thing." The term subtle, in a bad sense, is ill applied to Mr. Baxter, but he is certainly liable sometimes to the charge of metaphysical obscurity, which, as must ever be the case, renders his works far less useful than otherwise they would be.

But, not to digress, it is to be observed, that although the text above cited, with many others, fully establish this important principle, and thereby decisively prove the acceptableness of natural religion, where no other is to be obtained; yet, it by no means follows that our best endeavours should not be exerted, to promote the knowledge and influence of Christianity, where it is at present unknown. On the contrary, possessing as we do, in the enjoyment of this Divine gift, immense privileges and advantages, we should be solicitous, as far as we are able, to communicate these blessings to the comparatively benighted corners of the habitable globe, and to labour as well as pray, in the use of reasonable, probable, and allowed means, (as to the nature and application of which we must be supposed to differ), "That the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, may shine into them."

With this view, much expense and labour have recently been employed in this country, by different denominations, in the institution of Missionary Societies, for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, into the degrees of the success or failure of which we do not now inquire. We may conceive, however, of various methods which ministers of different religious sentiments might naturally be led to adopt in the prosecution of this important object.

Let us suppose a zealous Calvinist, engaged in this arduous undertaking. He will probably begin his work with the history of the fall; the supposed consequent inherent depravity of human nature; the utter incapacity of man, in his natural state, to do a

good action, or even to think a good thought. He would then proceed to the doctrines of irresistible grace; a triune Deity; the necessity of infinite merit to atone for infinite guilt, which he imputes to a frail, finite and fallible creature, because committed against an infinite Being; and the assertion, that if they die without the Christian faith, even when it has been but briefly proposed to them, and they have had little time to examine its evidences, they will be infallibly condemned to all eternity. If they should express astonishment at some of these positions, as "things hard to be understood!" and are dreadfully alarmed at the idea of infinite and everlasting vengeance, he will presently soothe their fears, by informing them, that though their case is at present desperate, it is so far from being hopeless, or without remedy, that it may be changed for the better in an instant; that they have only to accept of Christ, by a strong and lively faith, and the work is done: 'That he hath wrought out a free and full salvation for all his elect, of which number, each individual to whom he is preached, may hope to be one, seeing we cannot search the book of God's decrees; and who can never finally fall from his grace, for whom he loves, "he loves to the end:" That it is true, this faith should operate to the mending their manners, and reforming their wicked lives, and that this it will infallibly accomplish; but that at the same time, they must always be exceedingly careful not to pay any undue regard to the good works which they may perform, which, being imperfect, can neither be the cause, matter, nor condition of our justification, and which, in any wise confided in, will ultimately deprive them of all the privileges and blessings of gospel grace. He will guard them against Satanic influence, the author of which, he will describe as a kind of demi-god, possessed of a species of omnipresence, having access to the minds of men in all times, places and circumstances, and tempting them to kinds and degrees of sin, far beyond the extent and discovery of their own natural powers and corruptions. The writer believes, that he does not misrepresent a species of preaching, to be met with in no



inconsiderable degree, in some religious communities: if he doth, he will be very ready, upon conviction, to acknowledge his error. Nor would he by any means insinuate that pious and sensible ministers of this class preach nothing else but these principles: he only means to intimate that they frequently constitute a leading part of their public discourses.

Now, let us suppose, on the other hand, a Bishop Taylor or a Wilkins, a Clarke or a Tillotson, a Whichcote or a Foster, a Price or a Paley, engaged in the same design. He would probably, like the great founder of Christianity, begin with deducing his instructions from the things around him, and lead his hearers from nature, up to nature's God: he would display the wonders of creation, and the different effects which they produce, upon the mind of the attentive, and of the superficial observer: \* he would expatiate on the nature and perfections of the Deity, as far as discoverable by us; his unity, and supremacy, his infinite power, presence, wisdom, and goodness; and when they had arrived at some tolerable acquaintance with, and conviction of those important and fundamental principles, he would proceed to demonstrate the justice and holiness of God, the essential and unalterable distinction between moral good and evil, the obligation of gratitude to the Supreme Being for all his benefits, the necessity and advantage of constant and humble prayer in all created natures, and more especially in so frail, fallible, and dependent a being as man, not only as an essential means of religion, but as an integral and constituent part of it, and of conformity to the image of the great

and glorious Being whom we worship, in all his imitable excellencies and perfections: he would proceed to demonstrate the evident traces of a moral government, begun, but not consummated in the system around us, and the consequent inferences which wise men in all ages have hence deduced in favour of the belief in a future state of rewards and punishments; the natural equality of mankind, as creatures of the same God, endowed with powers and faculties alike in kind, though different in degree, and apparently designed for the same glorious end, and at the same time the necessary subordination of ranks in society, arising from the very constitution of human nature, our different talents, capacities and inclinations, and the prodigious variety of labours and occupations requisite in the circumstances in which we are placed; the sacredness of property, the necessity and advantage of civil order, and just government; our social and relative duties, as parents and children, masters and servants, subjects and rulers, neighbours, relatives, and friends; the evils and mischiefs arising from polygamy, adultery, and promiscuous concubinage; the harmony of families where two only are joined in wedlock; the benefits thence arising to the children and servants; and the probability of an original law in this behalf, from the great Creator, who manifests simplicity and harmony in all his designs and operations: he would dwell on the beauty and necessity of public as well as of personal and family worship; how admirably adapted it is to serve the cause of religion and morality; how it "wipes off the rust of the week," and attaches man to man in more close and intimate bonds: then he would lay before them a moral chart of the world we inhabit, and, perhaps, sometimes in private, a natural one; he would describe the different situations, climates, advantages and disadvantages of the globe; he would acquaint them with the outlines of astronomy, thereby to afford them just views of the grandeur and immensity of the universe; he would lead them from world to world, and from system to system, from this small speck of earth, to worlds and suns above,

\* "Pontoppidan, Bishop of Bergen, introduced into his sermons complete tracts of natural history, considering them as excellent articles of theology."

*St. Pierre.*

Dr. Young speaks of those, who—

"Ne'er ask'd the moon one question,  
never held

Least correspondence with a single star:

Nor rear'd an altar to the queen of  
heaven,

Walking in brightness! or her train  
adored!"

innumerable, unknown, and unconceived! and when they were lost in the immense survey, and sinking from this towering height, he would sustain and renovate their fainting spirits with this glorious and animating truth, that—

—“One soul outweighs them all!  
And calls th’ astonishing magnificence  
Of unintelligent creation, poor.”

YOUNG.

He would now proceed to consider the different religions in the world, and to shew that all nations have some religion: he would demonstrate that the Deity has various methods of communicating his mind and will to his rational offspring, always and every where by the objects of nature, the course of Providence, and the powers of reason and conscience, sometimes by the instrumentality of superior beings, called angels, who have appeared occasionally in a glorious, and at other times in a human form; but that, as our present faculties are weak and imperfect, and we can scarcely bear the effulgence of angelic, and still less of Divine glory, he hath been graciously pleased for the most part to speak to us by the medium of sages, patriarchs, and prophets, men in all respects like ourselves, except in those extraordinary and supernatural powers with which they were occasionally endowed, and by means of which they were enabled to point out with authority the path of duty to an ignorant and benighted race, who, by neglecting the natural notices of God, and his Providence, and of their duty and expectations, had departed from their allegiance, and rendered themselves obnoxious to his displeasure: he will shew the evils of paganism, as a corruption of the true primitive religion, the absurdity of bowing down to stocks and stones, as to visible gods, which our hands have formed; for, how can those things help us, which, though we cannot create, we can alter or destroy? and even the folly of worshipping the host of heaven, which, though essentially serviceable to man by their benign influences, appear to be as much under a law, as the elements of fire and water which are more immediately under our cognizance: he

will then gradually unfold the history of the patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian dispensations, with their characteristic distinctions and peculiarities; the superiority of the latter above the former, in a vast variety of respects, particularly in its universality, and the extent of its promises and prospects; the sublime morality of all, in perfect unison with the principles of natural light, and in what respects these principles are by the gospel improved and enlarged: he will represent the Divine Author of our religion, as a person appearing in our proper nature, long designated in the councils of the Most High, foretold by the ancient prophets, himself a prophet, and greater than them all, described in the Jewish Scriptures as “the desire of all nations,” and manifested “in the fulness of time;” that, by virtue of his high office and character, he is invested with a name greater than the kings of the earth, and to which none of the preceding prophets could lay any claim; that he is emphatically styled “Emmanuel, or God with us,” “the Son of God,” the Saviour and Judge of the world, the Ambassador of the Most High, the grand Organ and Dispenser of the Divine grace and mercy to mankind, whose words are to be regarded as the words of God, whose threatenings are not promulgated in vain, and whose promises shall be abundantly fulfilled.

He will represent the former and the latter prophets, and especially the great prophet of Nazareth and his apostles, as proving their Divine commission, by the performance of incontestible miracles—a species of evidence of which they will readily perceive the force and importance, when they are convinced that all things are equally subject to the Divine jurisdiction; that the same power which created, can easily change or destroy; and that none can work a true miracle but God, or those commissioned by him: that therefore a miracle is an occasional departure from the common course of nature, by a Divine interposition, in attestation of the authority of a particular person, or for the accomplishment of some important moral purpose, immediate or remote: that, if they were to see four thousand persons fed in a



wilderness, without any apparent adequate means, a withered arm instantly "made whole as the other," or a dead body raised to life again, they must needs be assured of a Divine interposition: that if this were to happen now, it would be equally true 1800 years hence, and to all eternity, and that therefore, if it happened 1800 years ago, it is equally true now, and that we have all the evidence of the reality of these events, from testimony and a legitimate and infallible tradition, which, at this distance of time, the nature of the thing will admit of: that to doubt of the truth of miracles in former ages, because we see none at present, is the most foolish thing in the world, and a principle which would lead us to deny every thing but what we ourselves behold: that an ignorant native of a burning climate might find it difficult, if not impossible to conceive, how water should ever be converted into a solid mass; yet that this is an absolute fact, which such persons ought to believe, upon the testimony of sufficient and credible reporters: that a person brought up in a mine might deny there was such a body as the sun, a man born blind, that there was such a thing as light, or one ignorant of letters, that language and sentiments could be transported to incalculable distances, without the aid of voice or sound: that the wonders of creation, of which we are daily witnesses, prove a sovereign and uncontrolable Power, who, for wise and obvious reasons does not think proper to depart from those fixed laws which he hath appointed, except in particular cases: that the creation of the world was a miracle in the eye of intelligent beings, then existing, and that a miracle may now take place before they are aware: that the solid ground may instantly give way under their feet, and they may sink into an unfathomable abyss: that the healthful air may become baleful and pestiferous, the sun descend to the earth, and burn it up with fire unquenchable, and afterwards himself be quenched in a mighty ocean, as a twinkling taper in the slender stream! and that all this would certainly happen, and the material universe become an absolute blank, should the Creator once withdraw his energy, or should not his

wisdom and goodness continue to regulate and control the exercise of his power.

He will point out to them the imitable as well as the peculiar and distinguishing character of Christ, his profound humility and submission to the Divine will, his perfect purity, his heavenly mindedness, his unlimited benevolence, and universal charity, extending even to his enemies, persecutors and murderers, the exalted state to which he is now advanced, and the important consequences that will ensue at his second glorious appearance, the superadditions which are made by the gospel to former systems, natural or revealed, not only in the charity of its precepts, and the immensity of its promises and prospects, but also, as to some of its essential forms and characteristics, namely, that although we may sometimes pray to God, considered only as Creator and Rector of the universe, in which practice the Lord's prayer itself will justify us, which appears to be founded in the principles of simple theism; yet, we are obliged more frequently in private, and invariably in the public religious assemblies, to pray as Christians—that is, in the name of Christ, and with a due regard to his person, character and sufferings, his mediation and intercession, principles often alluded to and inculcated in the New Testament, though we may not always fully comprehend their import, seeing they are such as "the angels desire to contemplate," and must ever be careful not to interpret the passages relating to them, and which are sometimes evidently figurative and metaphorical, in any sense inconsistent with, or dishonourable to the character of the Supreme Deity, who, as he is in himself the great source of all being and perfection, so, he is the original author of all the benefits we derive from the Christian dispensation, which are the effects and not the causes of his infinite and essential benevolence: and that without this open profession of Christian principles, "in the great congregation," we shall not only be guilty of high ingratitude to God, and to the Redeemer, but that also, by this unwarrantable omission, the churches of Christ may in the succession of time be converted into assemblies of Deists, or degene-

rate into a similarity with the schools of the heathen philosophers.

He will often impress upon their minds that the doctrines and duties of the gospel are few and simple, but the methods of enforcing and illustrating them, multiform and indefinite; and hence the necessity and utility of an order of men set apart (*primi inter pares*) as ministers of Divine things, subject at all times to the authority of the great and only head of the church, and to the genuine dictates of the sacred writers; together with the beautiful simplicity and fitness of the two positive ordinances of the gospel, as admirably calculated, in connection with public worship and instruction, to preserve and maintain it in the world.

If any of these children of nature, whose spiritual wants we are now contemplating, more sagacious and inquisitive than the rest, should ask how so much evil can arise, under the dominion of an all-wise, gracious, and infinitely powerful Being? the faithful minister will reply, that natural evil is, in one view, a mark of the degeneracy of the mundane system, on account of the transgression of its first inhabitants, serving as a perpetual and awful manifestation of the Divine displeasure on that account; of which there appears striking and ample proof in the disorders of the elements, the infirmities of human nature, the general prevalence of death, the discord of the lower orders of beings around us, the peculiar sufferings of women, the necessity of extreme and painful labour in some of the various concerns and avocations of life, which often destroys the individual prematurely, and of animal food to the sustenance of man; none of which circumstances we can reasonably suppose to have taken place in his first state, or to have constituted a part of the original plan of Providence, and of which they will know more, when they shall have become acquainted with the history of the old world, and better understand the methods of the Divine administration: that even here the Deity brings good out of evil: that by the increasing knowledge of the laws of nature, and the progressive improvements in society, painful and excessive labour becomes much diminished: that storms, tempests and volcanoes purify the air and

the sea: that frost and snow in the northern regions fructify the earth, and make it approach in the succeeding seasons, to the paradisaical appearance of more genial and salubrious climes: \* that earthquakes, though dreadful in themselves, are rare and partial, may render contiguous portions of ground more stable and secure, sometimes expose new land, more than they have taken away, and produce many valuable ends in the moral world, by alarming the careless and inconsiderate, who are not affected by the common course of nature and Providence: that those who die by these calamities will be impartially dealt with in a future state, and that their uncommon and painful lot may possibly serve to diminish the punishment of their iniquity hereafter: nor are we ever to judge of the character or future destination of individuals, by the nature or degree of their sufferings in the present world, where, in many respects, "all things come alike to all."

That sometimes natural evil arises from natural good, and that we cannot enjoy the one, without danger of the other: that if the system of the universe is maintained by the same law which causes a stone unsupported to fall from the top of a hill, this law may be the occasion of serious accidents or death in particular cases: that if the fire is to warm us at a distance, and to dress our food, it must be something of prodigious force and efficacy, and which will necessarily hurt or destroy those substances or beings which approach too near it, or unheedingly rush into its bosom: that if the water is to assuage our thirst, to quench the raging flames, to serve the important purposes of navigation and commerce, and to answer many other valuable ends, it will sometimes, from the effect of winds and tides, overflow its banks, and must needs suffocate those animals which are immersed in it, and whose organs are not fitted to live in this element: † that in a state of primitive

\* "Though winter had been none, had man been true,

And earth be punished for its tenants' sake

Yet, not in vengeance!" COWPER.

† The reader may perhaps think these cases are so plain, that there was no need of expatiating upon them. How it is



innocence, man must have been liable to accidents, from his very frame and constitution, though we have reason to believe he was then in the possession of sufficient means to prevent their fatal effects, of which at present we are entirely ignorant: that nevertheless in our fallen state, the Deity hath graciously provided many remedies, both in the texture of our animal bodies, and in the science of medicine, that a broken bone placed in a due position, will unite of itself; that a deep wound, will, in common cases, if properly closed, heal without any further trouble; and a deeper still, attended with loss of substance, by suitable management, be gradually restored: that there are medicines adapted to every organ of the human frame, to assuage the raging fever, to brace the debilitated fibres, to remove or tranquillize slight pains, and imperiously to command a truce in the most grievous sufferings that "flesh is heir to:" that sickness often ends in confirmed health, and that "to the righteous, death is the gate of life."

That moral evil arises from the neglect or abuse of our rational faculties and voluntary powers, which every man knows and finds by his own bitter experience, and which, as far as he has been a means of producing, he has no one to blame for but himself: that the sufferings which we endure from natural evil, or from the moral evil of others, often tend to our own good, and will serve, if patiently borne, to increase our future reward; and that the Deity hath provided for the reduction of the latter, by means of religion: that we have reason to think it is gradually decreasing, at least as to some of its prominent and flagrant enormities—such as war, tyranny, persecution, and slavery: that, in this view, even the present world may be approximating to a paradisaical state; and that the Almighty hath doubtless prepared

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with him, is uncertain; but the writer has often heard (otherwise) sensible persons inquire, why Providence should suffer an ancient tenement to fall in upon its inhabitants, or good men to be shipwrecked, burnt, or drowned! The argument has also been lately alluded to in this work by the eloquent Mr. Howe.

means for this purpose, in the depths of eternal ages, of which, at present, we can form no conception.

That the evil of imperfection is incident to all created beings, and indeed inseparable from their very nature: that it is probable the sublimest intelligencies have passed through a state of trial before they arrived at their supreme felicity, because holiness by influx, or without the co-operation of our own powers, would make a rational being a mere machine, which, though it might indeed render him happy, could never constitute him a moral agent, or worthy of praise; and that though none but God is impeccable, yet, by long established habits of virtue, a perfect freedom from temptation, and the benefits of correspondent society, rational beings may attain to a state of holiness and happiness, from which it is morally impossible that they should ever deviate: and that this is the state we call heaven, "which is first a temper, and then a place."\*

That the happiness of heaven, as it will be proportioned to our attainments and the improvement of our talents, hath the nature of a reward; but as it is the possession of immortal life, is a "free gift," and the restoration, through Jesus Christ, of a forfeited inheritance.

He will teach them that in contemplating human nature we should equally guard against a pharisaical pride and a false humility; that the gospel clearly ascertains what reason suggests, that man is placed here as a candidate for futurity; that he is a compound being; that by his capacity for religion and his virtuous affections he is allied to the angels, by his animal propensities to the brutes, by the vices of the spirit—pride, ambition, envy, malice and revenge, to something which men have generally agreed to term diabolical: that from this wonderful composition result great dangers and prodigious hopes; that though bad habits have often a fatal, and good ones a transforming efficacy, yet neither of them have a necessitating influence: That the Deity hath "gifts even for the rebellious," and much more for those who love and serve him, to whom "he will shew the secrets of his covenant:" that though true re-

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\* Whichcote.

penitance is never too late, yet late repentance is seldom true: that the early dedication of ourselves to God is peculiarly acceptable to him: and that it behoves every one to improve the present moment, and, according to the divine philosophy of our religion, "to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, because it is God who worketh in him both to will and to do."

That though in some particular circumstances "the heart" may be considered as "foolish above all things, and desperately wicked," yet, on the other hand, good men in the present life have often attained to a steadiness and consistency of character, and to that state of "perfect love which casteth out" a bitter and tormenting "fear," and even "to a full assurance of hope," though they are never to judge of their spiritual state by animal sensations and transports, but by its effects upon their life and conversation.

That it is impossible to plead merit with God, seeing we are all "concluded under sin," have nothing "which we have not received," and when we have done our best, are still, as to him, "but unprofitable servants:" nevertheless, that every good man, according to Solomon, is, in a certain sense, "satisfied from himself," and with St. Paul, may and ought to "rejoice in the testimony of his own conscience." And that to depreciate holiness or moral rectitude, directly or indirectly, is to depreciate an essential and constituent part of true religion, and while we profess to be guiding men to heaven, to be in reality factors for hell.\*

That it is as impossible the Deity should be wanting to his creatures, as that he should cease to exist, and that every suggestion of a contrary kind should be rejected with abhorrence: that "all souls are his, who hateth nothing which he hath made, and with whom is no respect of persons:" that though natural religion is sufficient where no other is to be had, because

\* The Prophet Jeremiah calls the righteousness of the people he was addressing, "filthy rags;" by which he meant to intimate that, as a body, they had none, or none worth mentioning: but the sacred writers never call real righteousness by any opprobrious terms, but directly the reverse.

"in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him;" yet, when a clearer manifestation of the Divine will is proposed to them, they will become highly criminal if they do not inquire into it, receive and obey it.

That notwithstanding the sublime expectations to which we are raised by Christianity, we must guard against "a sinful weariness of life, an avarice for the hire without the work,"† but patiently wait "the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," when, if we shall have performed our duty according to the light and means afforded us, we shall be received, by the grace of the gospel, into a state of elevated employment, and of a happiness far beyond our present conceptions, and which will be strictly everlasting. Rev. xxii. 3, 4. But if we have abused our talents and neglected our opportunities, so as to incur the charge of final impenitence, we shall be adjudged to a state of positive suffering, pointed out to us by significant and awful symbols, which, being awarded by the infinite justice of Him who cannot err, and all whose attributes are in strict unison and harmony, will be acknowledged as just, even by the objects of it, both with respect to its degree and duration, because exactly proportioned to the demerits of the offender. Luke xii. 47, 48.

All this, and more than this, will a faithful Dispenser of Divine things set before his transmarine hearers and catechumens, in the course of his public and private ministrations, "as they are able to bear it." And, lastly, when they shall have acquired the art of reading, and a fit opportunity occurs, he will commit to their keeping "the oracles of eternal truth," in their own language, guarded with a few plain rules for their interpretation, whereby, in conjunction with the other means of grace, "they may become wise unto salvation!"

Of these several modes of preaching the gospel to the uninformed *abroad*, or the uninformed *at home*, a question naturally arises, *which* appears to be most conformable to truth, and is likely to be attended with the most solid and lasting effects?

AN OCCASIONAL READER.

† Moses Brown.



SIR,

Dec. 24, 1816.

THE pens of the learned have so often been employed upon the Athanasian Creed, that it might seem useless to excite any farther inquiry upon so threadbare a subject. But I know not whether amongst the numerous discussions it has occasioned, it has been viewed in the light in which, after much consideration, it appears to me to have been composed. All seem to have agreed in one opinion, that it was not written by Athanasius; and it is not settled at what time nor where it first appeared in what is called, though very improperly, the Christian church. It has gone, however, for many ages under the name of the creed of St. Athanasius, and I am inclined to believe that it was first published under that name, as being really the creed of this celebrated worldly disputant, though the author had a very different end in view in its publication, and one which rendered it necessary that his name should be concealed. In short, the more I consider the subject, the more it strikes me, that this famous creed was meant as a burlesque upon the faith, then generally prevailing in the world: and, if my opinion is right, it must be allowed that the author has fully succeeded in his intentions. That the hoax should have taken so completely, is probably more than he expected; and whilst we admire the ingenuity of the composition, we cannot but be surprised that its aim should not have been seen through, and that what was intended as ridicule should in so short a time be adopted, and for so many centuries be maintained as truth. Neither my employments or my inclinations permit me to turn over again the massy folios in which this question lies immersed: but it might amuse as well as instruct some younger inquirer, to examine the subject in the point of view in which I have placed it. I can hardly believe that the writer was a Christian, and I fear that the search after him will be as difficult as the one at present after the author of the Letters of Junius. It is not, however, of so much consequence to discover the name of the writer, as to establish the fact, that the Athanasian Creed was promulgated to burlesque the opinions of Athanasius, and to turn this

celebrated champion of the apostate church into ridicule. Absurd, however, as were many of the notions of this metaphysical saint, I must defend his memory from the unjust imputation cast upon it by this creed; whose ingenuity might indeed have excited a smile in his countenance, but he never would have allowed it to be a fair transcript of his sentiments.

I am, ever,

INVESTIGATOR.

*Higham Hill,*

*January 15th, 1817.*

SIR,

WHEN a man has been handsomely invited to speak, it might appear disrespectful to be silent. This is my apology for saying a few words more on the subject of miracles, while I am not conscious that I have any thing to advance which is worthy the notice of your readers. I am happy that your ingenious Correspondent, A. B. C. agrees with me in the main point, that Mr. Hume's reasoning is inconclusive. The only remaining question, then, is, whether the testimony in favour of the miracles recorded in the New Testament is sufficient to establish facts confessedly so extraordinary: and of this question every man must judge for himself. There is no scale of improbability on the one hand, or of the strength of testimony on the other, to which such an appeal can be made as to force conviction on every mind. I agree with your Correspondent, that no event which has taken place according to the laws of nature, could in reality have been antecedently improbable. But I at the same time conceive that we can form no judgment of the improbability of a miracle, by a miracle being understood an evidence of a Divine interposition for a certain object. Your Correspondent observes that I should require stronger testimony to prove that a man had risen from the dead, than that a man had died. Undoubtedly. And if this supposed resurrection of a dead man were not referred to a Divine Power, and were not intended to answer some useful purpose, though I might perhaps be compelled to admit it (as no violation of the laws of nature can be more wanton and inexplicable than the falsehood of the strongest testimony), I should scarcely know how

to defend the belief of it on the ground of reason. But the credibility of this fact is altogether changed when I see that it is calculated to answer an important end, and moreover see this end effected by it. The event now supposed is not properly speaking a violation of the laws of nature, which I take for granted will continue to operate as before. It is necessary for the benefit of man that the laws of nature should be steady in their operation; but it may however also be necessary that God should for a certain purpose interpose and act without them. Your Correspondent observes, that we are not much disposed to admit the miracles of the second and third centuries, and asks, if we make thus free with testimony removed from us by the lapse of time, where are we to stop? I reply, when we arrive at miracles which were calculated to answer an important object, and which are supported by testimony which appears unexceptionable and satisfactory. And I cannot help remarking here, that the progress and present existence of Christianity, affords such a proof of the credit which was given to the miracles of the New Testament history in the earliest ages, as compensated for the distance to which the testimony is thrown by the intervention of time, and which, though it does not actually diminish the force of the testimony in itself considered, causes it to press with less force upon our minds, and leaves us at liberty to neglect it if we please.

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

E. COGAN.

Dec. 20, 1816.

SIR,

THE following passage, very creditable to the literary character of the *Assembly*, and no ill refutation of the calumny against them, in Lord Clarendon's History, I copy from *Whitelock's Memorials*, where it stands as "a lily among the thorns," amidst stratagems of war and diplomacy, and "hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach."

"The Assembly of Divines desired, by some of their brethren sent to the house, that Mr. Patrick Young might be encouraged in the printing of the Greek Testament, much ex-

pected and desired by the learned, especially beyond seas, and an ordinance was read for printing and publishing the Old Testament of the *Septuagint* translation; wherein Mr. Young had formerly taken pains, and had in his hand, as library-keeper of St. James's, an original *Tecta Bible* of that translation." 1646. March 13. W. Mem. 1682. p. 202.

It appears, that, in consequence of this application to the House, on the 16th of October following "a committee was named to consider of printing the *Septuagint Bible*." Id. p. 229.

Mr. Patrick Young, who was library-keeper by the king's appointment, before the war, was replaced in 1649, by Whitelock, who had the learned Mr. Duery for his deputy.

The Presbyterian churchmen, though they would thus excite the Parliament to patronise the Greek learning, yet were as little disposed to encourage an *Improved Version*, if not a production of their own, as any Episcopalian Churchmen or Orthodox Non-conformists of our times. Thus, Aug. 20, 1645, the House, no doubt, at the suggestion of the divines, "order that no foreign impressions of *English Bibles* be vended here, without perusal of the Assembly." Id. p. 161.

Can any of your readers say what was a *Tecta Bible*.

IGNOTUS.

Dec. 22, 1816.

SIR,

I SHALL be thankful for information as to the authority on which an octavo volume published in 1761, anonymously, under the title of *Universal Restitution a Scripture Doctrine*, was attributed to *Stonehouse*. By that name it is quoted in the late Mr. Matthews's *Recorder*.

The person designed is, I apprehend, the same who is mentioned in Hervey's *Meditations*. He died in 1795, and is thus described in the N. Ann. Reg. of that year, (p. 14). "The Rev. Sir James Stonehouse, Bart. M. D. Rector of Great and Little Cheverell, Wilts." Was there a second edition of the book?

BREVIS.



SIR, Chichester, Jan. 3, 1817.

YOUR Correspondent R. L. (XI. 700) has made it necessary for me to occupy (with your permission) a small space in the Repository with a defence of my interpretation of the passages adduced in the lecture at Worship Street, on Nov. 28th, to prove that the *final happiness of all men is a fact predicted in Scripture*. If I interpret the signature aright, this is not the first time that I have had to thank my friendly opponent for his favourable opinion and useful suggestions. His remarks and my sermon have however much the same fate, for I am not more convinced by the one than he was by the other. Our debate lies within a very narrow compass. We agree in expecting ultimate universal felicity, and only differ as to the mode in which it is announced in Scripture. He believes it as an "inferential doctrine," while to me it seems to be promised explicitly. His remarks furnish one presumptive argument in my favour. If the doctrine in question be "a most rational conclusion from the known character of the Deity, from the observed tendencies of Providence, and from many very plain declarations of Scripture," it is highly probable that somewhere or other we shall find it expressly taught. I know of no tenet which possesses such claims to the rank of a Christian doctrine, and yet remains unrecognized and unsanctioned by the direct assertion of Scripture. It would be strange indeed that on so important a subject reason should speak plainly and revelation be profoundly silent.

R. L. has dismissed Matt. xxv. 46, rather too hastily. On the term rendered everlasting, we have no dispute: but he should have shewn that the punishment here spoken of is indefinite, and may be either corrective or vindictive. Simpson's Essays (Vol. I. p. 56) may perhaps convince him that *κολασις* means not punishment in general, but *corrective punishment* or *chastisement*. And if so, in what does asserting that the wicked shall go into correction, inflicted by him whose plans never fail, differ from asserting that they shall be corrected? The prediction of a reforming process must be equivalent to a prediction of its happy result, unless Omnipotence can be baffled.

On Rom. viii. 19—23, it does not

" suffice to say that the world itself may

be delivered from the bondage of corruption, being universally blessed with the liberty of God's children, during a long period of paradisaical happiness, in which the wicked who are dead shall not be partakers." The "world," in ver. 20 and 23, obviously means all mankind in all ages; in ver. 19 it cannot possibly mean exclusively those who shall be living during the millennium, or be raised for its enjoyment: why then should it receive in ver. 21 this limited and strange interpretation? The term occurs four times in as many verses: twice it must mean mankind universally. The writer seems to be speaking of the same thing throughout; and nothing but the absolute absurdity or evident falsehood of the position should prevent our being satisfied with this plain declaration, that all "made subject to vanity" shall at length possess "the glorious freedom of the children of God." R. L. agrees with me in understanding this last phrase to mean a state of purity and happiness.

It is not "quite a gratuitous assumption that the end in 1 Cor. xv. 24, signifies something *beyond* the resurrection and the judgment." Paul introduces it as a subsequent period—"Afterwards (*εἰτα*, *deinde*, *postea*, *deinceps*, SCHLEUSNER) will be the end." And he assigns a reason for its not immediately following the judgment, viz. that Christ must reign till he have put all enemies under his feet, including the second death which awaits the wicked. The moral enemies of Christ are death, sin, and misery: how, "without torture," can then being "put down," mean any thing else but the universality of life, holiness, and joy? While impurity and misery prevail in any part of his creation, how can the pure and blessed God be all in all?

Phil. ii. 10, 11, is certainly a "declaration of the glory conferred upon Jesus Christ, in reward of his humility and obedience unto death;" but there are passages from which we may learn that his reward was something more than being made the Judge of mankind. He was lifted up from the earth that he might draw all men unto him: he tasted death for every man: he died for all, for the whole world. The condemnation, the sufferings, or even the unwilling homage of the wicked, can be no recompense to his benevolent

mind, for having made exertions and endured death to promote their salvation. Nor can I imagine how his sentencing them to their unwelcome misery, should induce them to bow either at or *in* his name, or to confess him Lord to the glory of God the Father. There is nothing in the text to mark the unwillingness of the homage, or to distinguish it from that spiritual submission which (see Rom. x. 9) entitles to salvation.

1 Tim. ii. 4 and 1 Tim. iv. 10, were not, I believe, either of them adduced by me, but they might have been, without injury to the cause I was advocating. As to the first, I prefer the reading of the Improved Version, God desireth all men to be saved, to that of Macknight, recommended by R. L. for two reasons: 1. *Desireth* expresses more accurately than *commandeth* the force of the original verb, and may be substituted in the very passages adduced by Macknight in support of his rendering. 2. It agrees better with the connexion. Paul exhorts to offer prayer for all men, especially for kings and those in authority, because God desires all men to be saved, and Christ gave himself a ransom for all. Those only to whom the gospel was preached were *commanded* of God to repent, and they were a very small proportion of the rulers and all men whose salvation is prayed for by Christians, and desired (therefore determined) by the Almighty. The other passage must pass for a similar or stronger assertion of the doctrine in question, unless it can be shewn (which I very much doubt) that believers are, or were in the apostolic age, more specially preserved from adversity, danger, and death, than unbelievers.

Three other passages were introduced in the sermon, which, as my friend has not noticed them, I will just mention.

Matt. xxviii. 18. The power, authority, or dominion of Christ, is purely spiritual. It is the reign of holy and benignant principles in the heart. Its universality (here asserted) consists, and will be realized, in the unbounded prevalence of goodness and felicity.

Rom. v. 12—21. Resurrection and everlasting life are here predicted as universal blessings. "Grace," "the gift of grace," "the free gift," are odd

expressions for a resurrection to endless misery, or to sufferings terminated by annihilation. There is only one way in which a revival from the grave can be advantageous to those who are unfitted for pure enjoyment. The writer must therefore have had the notion of their subsequent reformation in his mind, and have intended by his language to produce it in the minds of his readers.

Rev. iv. 13. John knew that Christ was to possess unlimited spiritual dominion, and he was favoured with a vision of its realization. The homage paid both to God and Christ is obviously voluntary and grateful; and if it be not strictly universal, language is unmeaning and useless.

I hope, Sir, enough has been said to vindicate my quotations from the objections of R. L. As my only object was to reply to *his* observations, I have taken many things for granted, which, to an oppugner of the doctrine of restoration, would have required proof.

W. J. FOX.

January 14th, 1817.

SIR,

IT appears to me that Dugald Stewart, in his Estimate of Barrow (XI. 695), has mistaken the meaning of that eminent divine, and accused him of inconsistency where he has really committed none. In the one passage, Barrow considers "inordinate self-love as the main ingredient, and common source of our evil dispositions;" in the other, he observes that "reason prescribes to us a sober regard to our welfare, a self-love, which common sense cannot but allow and approve." Is not this saying, in other words, that mankind, even when their end is to benefit themselves, do not always listen to the dictates of reason and pursue the right means. But where is the inconsistency of this *assertion*? The inconsistency of the *conduct* every man will allow, even while he practises it. Many of your readers must be conversant with Barrow's Works, and some one of them would, perhaps, oblige me, through the medium of your Repository, by pointing out the inaccuracy complained of, if it really exists. In the propositions brought forward by the Professor, I can perceive nothing contradictory.

D.



SIR,

Jan. 2, 1817.

**T**HOUGH it is perhaps seldom worth while to employ many words in asserting or disclaiming a name, there is one appellative which has been coupled with the name of Christians, that I should be sorry to see grow into frequent use:—I allude to the term *Philosophical Christians*. If by it nothing more is meant than to describe that part of the Christian world which has received the Christian revelation, not from deference to authority, or in compliance with custom, but as a conviction of the judgment, the result of inquiry carried on with philosophical circumspection, the name can do neither good nor harm. Let the unbeliever shew if he can that he is a better philosopher in rejecting Christianity, than the believer is in receiving it. But if by the term be intended to describe a body of Christians, contradistinguished from all their brethren, by entertaining views of Christian doctrine more consonant with philosophy than those of other Christians, it is a name of bad omen, and one which those who hold the gospel in its simplest form, should least of all men choose for themselves. Christianity has not fared so well in the hands of philosophers, that any of its professors should affect the appellation of *philosophical Christians*. The interested craft of priests has scarcely done greater disservice to the Christian cause, than the temerity and subtlety of philosophical expounders of the faith. The first great corruption of the religion of Christ was effected by men who were disciples of Plato, and ventured to form an unhallowed combination of the dreams of their master of philosophy, with the doctrine of the great teacher of religion sent from God. For many centuries the philosophy of Aristotle was received in the schools with implicit faith, and it was necessary to interpret the Christian Scriptures, when they were interpreted at all, in consistency with the precepts of that philosophy. From the æra of the reformation to the present day it has been but too plain, that the two great divisions of the Protestant Church have each its philosophical hypothesis, with which their system of theology must be made to accord. The followers of Calvin and Arminius have shaped their religious creed respectively in conformity

with their notions of the nature of the human will, and the laws which they have assigned to the human mind. Both have their philosophy of the mind, and their religious views differ as their philosophy differs.

It is honourable to the creed of the Unitarian, and presumptive of its truth, that it is distinguished from the more popular forms of faith, by indifference to every hypothesis of the powers and laws of the human mind. It asks no aid, it professes no alliance with any metaphysical speculation. The facts upon which it is built remain the same, the great events to which it points are equally the objects of hope or fear, whether the soul of man be material or immaterial, whether the will determine itself or be determined by causes out of itself, whether the moral nature of man result from his intellectual nature alone, or depend upon a distinct faculty, a moral sense. All that he believes as a Christian is well-attested historical fact; all that he as a Christian expects beyond the grave he expects solely on the ground of well attested facts. His faith has no necessary connection with any hypothesis of the human mind, which men have laboured either to establish or to explode; it can exist either with them or without them: it requires only that man possess a moral nature, and be a fit subject of a moral government; and that he is such a creature is matter of daily experience, a fact which demands no confirmation, and which fears no diminution of proof from any philosophical hypothesis whatsoever. It has, however, happened that many believe, and more affect to believe, that there is an intimate, and almost necessary connection between the Unitarian faith and certain metaphysical doctrines, those particularly of materialism and philosophical necessity. This will not appear surprising when it is recollected, that these words have always carried dread and odium with them; and that Dr. Priestley, who pursued fearlessly, wherever he thought the traces of truth were visible, was led by his inquiries to embrace the unpopular side in metaphysics, as well as in theology. It is also true, that many of his theological followers, more probably than of any other class of Christians, have

embraced the Doctor's philosophical tenets, some, it may be, swayed by the authority of such a name, and many, charmed by the comprehension of his views, or convinced by the power of his arguments. It ought however to be known and acknowledged, that the simple form of Christianity which is maintained by Unitarians, requires no concomitant metaphysical creed, and that whether the name philosophical Christian be given them by enemies, or acknowledged by friends, its application is not appropriate. Among them as among other Christians there may be men, who are philosophers as well as Christians, but they know nothing of philosophical Christianity. It is unnecessary to burthen their religious belief with the difficulties that may appear to be yoked with any system of moral, or mental philosophy. Let the will of man be free; to vindicate the hypothesis from absurdity is not more incumbent upon them than upon other men, for any thing that they receive or reject as Unitarians. Let every act of the will be necessary; that it is so is not more implied in their belief, than in that of every other body of Christians; and if this hypothesis appear to be at variance with the moral nature and responsibility of man, they are not obliged to reconcile them by any thing in their creed, which distinguishes it from the orthodox faith. It may be true, that philosophical necessity is demonstrable by reason; it may also be true, that our moral feelings are all such as they should be on the supposition that we are strictly speaking the authors of our own actions, or that they have their origin within us, independently of determination from without; and that they are such as they should not be on the supposition that we act only as we are acted upon, and that though agents in name we are in fact but instruments. It may be true, that though we reason thus it is not thus we feel in the consciousness of good or evil. We feel self-approbation, and disapprobation; we feel complacency and remorse; we feel as it is right we should feel, if we are independent agents. Either therefore our moral feelings, or our logical conclusions are wrong; but whether the error be in our feelings or our

reasoning, in the consciousness or in the philosophy, let the philosopher determine. The Christian, and more than all others, the Unitarian Christian, may, if he will, be a spectator of the field without mingling in the strife.

L.

SIR,

*Dover, Jan. 10, 1817.*

ON reading the letter signed A. F. relative to the York application, in your last Number, (Vol. XI. p. 715,) I was led to the conclusion that your Correspondent was either not brought up in the true Unitarian school or that he was not much acquainted with the old General Baptist body.

It has not unfrequently been acknowledged that the Unitarian society in its infancy was nursed in the cradle of the General Baptist connection, that its missionaries are and have been with scarcely an exception, General Baptist ministers, that the General Baptists have not only preached and otherwise promoted Unitarian principles, but have and do many of them contribute to its funds, and that even those societies which hold with what is called strict communion, are in the habit of inviting and receiving Unitarian ministers, (and those too who reject adult Baptism) into their families, societies and pulpits. If this which has so often been admitted by respectable Pædobaptist Unitarians be true, and if with the knowledge of these circumstances, A. F. shall adhere to his former resolution, will not his conduct savour of something unknown to the enlightened, liberal and highly respectable body to which he professes to belong?

M. B.

P. S. A. F. is referred to an article which appeared in the Repository for June, 1815, Vol. X. p. 320.

SIR,

*Plymouth, Nov. 1816.*

IT is natural for men who enjoy but few privileges to be watchful over those few. Actuated by this principle, I went a short time since to proffer my vote for a county member in the character of a Dissenting minister who receives the rent of a freehold estate. My vote was rejected as I expected it would be; but I gained what I went for, a perfect knowledge



of the ground on which it was rejected, which I beg to state to your readers, that we may, if possible, recover a right, which certainly has been unjustly taken from us. The assessor, upon the vote being presented to him as doubtful, referred to the cases of committees of the House of Commons in which the votes of Dissenting ministers had been refused on the presumed ground, I conceive, that their freeholds are not freeholds for life. It seems to have been taken for granted, that our congregations can turn us out of them at pleasure. Several persons, both ministers and others, were examined who gave it as their opinion that no where did a power exist that could dispossess us; but the assessor, although he was evidently of the opinion that my vote ought to have been taken, and expressed to me in a handsome manner his regret that he must reject it, decided upon the precedents which he found already established. It is well known that precedents do not give law, and that no measures can be more inconsistent than those of committees of the House of Commons. And I was afterwards instructed, that in order to set these precedents aside, which for the present are imperious, nothing is wanting but a mandamus from the Court of King's Bench to restore a minister who has been put out of his pulpit by the congregation or the trustees acting for the congregation. If any such case has ever occurred, I should be personally obliged to some one of your readers who will furnish the particulars of it to your Repository, and my brother ministers who would find a pleasure in exercising their elective franchise would I conceive be also obliged. If any instance has ever been known of a decision of a court of justice expelling a man from the right of such a freehold who held it *vi et armis* against the consent of a congregation or of trustees it ought also in justice to be known; but in either of these cases the particular bearings of the case should be stated. If the present contention between the minister of Wolverhampton and his congregation should be carried into a court of justice, I apprehend it will set us right at once; if I am rightly informed of the case I think the minister will hold, and

our life estate will be apparent; a general election will soon come on, and there are indications that ministers have a design to catch us sleeping and steal a march, so that there is no time to lose, and I must solicit early communications on the subject. I am aware that our votes have sometimes been taken—as in Lord Milton's election at York, and also at Cambridge; but this is nothing to the purpose, have they ever been established as valid where they were contested?

I am, your's,  
J. W.

*Lewes, January 7th, 1817.*

SIR,  
THE writers of the histories which bear the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, record the story, that Pilate used to release, or it was a custom for them the Jews to have released, at the festival of the passover, one prisoner, without stating what gave rise to such a custom or when it first took place. If any of your readers can give the writer through the medium of the Monthly Repository, any information respecting the circumstances which gave rise to it, and the time when it came into use, he shall feel himself obliged.

R. A.

SIR,  
I WAS lately discoursing with some gentlemen upon the office of Sheriff of the proud city of London and populous county of Middlesex, and expressed a degree of surprise, in reference to the analogous provision for other less populous districts, that there should be one Sheriff only. They caught at the expression, and observed that there were two. Not so, I said, the law recognised but one Sheriff, though the office was executed by two persons. No matter, they replied in a breath, don't we know that there are two, substantively and numerically two? No assumed infallibility can away with facts; and the law must talk nonsense, if it hold your language. I bowed, and proceeded; the law, whatever you may presume to insinuate, is supreme, and requires implicit faith in its dictates. It propounds that Mr. Bridges is Sheriff, that Mr. Kerby is Sheriff,

and yet that there are not two Sheriffs, but one Sheriff. This is the technical faith, however incomprehensible, of which all are deemed cognisant, and, whoever would impugn it, without doubt he shall fail everlastingly. Fortunately for my argument, the gentlemen happened to be sound orthodox men,—and, after looking at each other, turned the conversation.

J. D. B. C.

GLEANINGS; OR, SELECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS MADE IN A COURSE OF GENERAL READING.

No. CCXC.

*Galileo.*

Galileo, whom Milton calls "the Tuscan Artist," in allusion to his telescope, was imprisoned in the Inquisition for six years and put to the torture for saying that *the earth moved*. The moment he was set at liberty, he looked up to the sky and down to the ground, and, stamping with his foot on the earth, in a contemplative mood, said, *still it moves*.

No. CCXCI.

*Invention and Discovery.*

The object of invention is to produce something which had no existence before; that of discovery, to bring to light something which did exist, but which was concealed from common observation. Otto Guerrieke invented the air-pump, Sanctorius invented the thermometer, and Newton and Gregory invented the reflecting telescope: Galileo discovered the solar spots, and Servetus and Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood. Improvements in the arts are inventions; facts brought to light by means of observation are discoveries.

No. CCXCII.

*Measure of Credibility.*

The number of those who believe in a system already established (says *Fontenelle*) does not in the least add to its credibility; but the number of those who doubt of it has a tendency to diminish it.

No. CCXCIII.

*Gravina.*

Gravina was an Italian divine and author. He missed a cardinal's hat through his satirical and severe turn

of mind. When he was at Rome he used to bow to coach-horses; because, said he, *were it not for the poor beasts, these great people would have men and even philosophers to draw their coaches*.

No. CCXCIV.

*A Recipe of Mr. Boyle's.*

The following cure for a dysentery is copied verbatim from the works of Mr. Boyle:

"Take the thigh-bone of a hanged man, (perhaps another may serve, but this was still made use of) calcine it to whiteness, and having purged the patient with an antimonial medicine, give him one dram of this white powder for one dose, in some good cordial, whether conserve or liquor."

No. CCXCV.

*Preparation for Subscription.*

A. 1534, April 13. The commissioners sat at Lambeth, to administer the oath of succession to the crown, upon the heirs of queen Ann, to the clergy, and chiefly those of London, that had not yet sworn; who all took it, not one excepted. And a certain Doctor, Vicar of Croyden, that it seems made some boggle before, went up with the rest; of whom Sir Thomas More, who then stood by, made an observation, how, as he past, he went to my lord's buttery-hatch, and called for drink, and drank *valde familiariter*; whether, saith he sarcastically, it were for gladness or dryness, or *quod ille notus erat pontifici*.

*Memorials of Bishop Cranmer.*

No. CCXCVI.

*Curious Public House Licence.*

"In Bishop Waynfleet's Register at Winchester, is a licence to John Calcot, host of the Checker-inn, Lambeth, (dated 1455,) to have an oratory in his house, and a chaplain for the use of his family and guests, as long as it shall continue decent and reputable, and well adapted for the celebration of divine service, (*decens, honestum et divino cultui aptum et dispositum*)."  
The Environs of London, p. 317. Most probably this indulgence was very seldom solicited by a publican in former days, and fruitless would be the search for a precedent of such licence granted on an application from the master of a modern hotel.



## REVIEW.

"Still pleased to praise, yet not afraid to blame."—POPE.

ART. I.—*The Book of Psalms; Translated from the Hebrew: with Notes Explanatory and Critical.* By Samuel Horsley, LL. D. F. R. S. F. A. S. late Lord Bishop of St. Asaph. 2 vols. 8vo. London, Sold by Rivingtons, and by Longman and Co. 1815. Vol. I. pp. 309. Vol. II. pp. 301.

THE varied pursuits, and versatile talents, of this writer, have long been known to the public. During his life he appeared before it as a mathematician, a polemical divine, a classical scholar, and a Biblical and Scriptural critic. Some minor works, among which a few political and controversial tracts must be ranked, were the productions of his pen. But the reputation of Bishop Horsley, superior as were his powers and attainments, is ill consulted by the zeal with which the volumes now to be reviewed, and other compositions that he did not live to prepare for the press, are brought under the notice of the world. Of the posthumous publications intended to do honour to his memory his *speeches* are perhaps the most unexceptionable and interesting: if in these he occasionally appears like a retained advocate, rather than as a lord of parliament; in the character of a lawyer much more than in that of a senator and a prelate; still he exhibits a wide compass of knowledge, admirable quickness of perception and strength of diction, and more than common skill in attack and in defence; nor should it be forgotten that all his energies of reasoning and language are directed against colonial slavery, and other practices not less disgraceful to the British and the Christian name. Two descriptions of persons are unjust to his memory—his blindly partial friends, and some of those of whose religious tenets he was the opponent. We perceive a want of discrimination in both. Among the former no individual has more essentially injured Dr. Horsley's fame than one who, of all men, ought to have been its guardian. We refer to the Rev. Heneage Horsley, who conceives "these volumes to be the most profound and the most important of all the learned works of their great

author!" It must be confessed, too, that certain of our Nonconformist and Unitarian brethren, who disliked the departed Bishop as a dogmatical controversialist and a bigotted Churchman, have not duly estimated the vigour of his faculties, the extent of his learning, the excellencies of his style and the independence of his mind. In his conflict with Dr. Priestley, he was the vanquished party (such is our deliberate opinion), not the victor: yet the triumph of Dr. Priestley was obtained over no ordinary foe!

Having thus adverted to Bishop Horsley's literary character and merits, we freely acknowledge that his translation of the Book of Psalms not only disappoints our expectations, but is eminently calculated to bring those charming devotional poems, and even sacred criticism itself, into contempt.

"It is much to be lamented," says the Rev. Heneage Horsley, "that the author left behind him no introductory chapter or prefatory essay to the translation, explanatory of his scheme of exposition, and furnishing a general commentary upon the whole book."—Pref. viii.

Nothing indeed can be plainer than that "the author" did not finish these papers for the public eye. Of many of the Psalms he has given no translation: upon some he has left no annotations; and yet for this incomplete version, divided between two slender octavo volumes, we are called upon to pay no common price. The experience of the Rev. Heneage Horsley has rendered him a proficient in the trade of editorship. His preface, for example, is extended through at least nine pages, additional to what it would have occupied, by "an extract from a sermon of the Bishop's on the first verse of the second Psalm." A few passages of this extract it will be necessary to transcribe:

"Of all the books of the Old Testament, the book of Psalms is the most universally [generally] read, but, I fear, as little as any understood. This cannot be ascribed to any extraordinary obscurity of these sacred songs, for of all the prophetic parts of the Scriptures they are certainly the most perspicuous. But it is owing partly,

I fear, to some dullness of the faculties of the natural man upon spiritual subjects, and partly to the misapplied labours of modern expositors, who have employed much ingenuity and learning to find the immediate subject of every Psalm, either in the history of the Jewish nation, or in the occurrences of the life of David."

"— of those [Psalms] which relate to the public history of the natural Israel, there are few in which the fortunes of the mystical Israel, the Christian church, are not adumbrated; and of those which allude to the life of David, there are none in which the Son of David is not the principal and immediate subject. David's complaints against his enemies are Messiah's complaints, first of the unbelieving Jews, then of the Heathen persecutors, and the apostate faction in later ages. David's afflictions are the Messiah's sufferings. David's penitential supplications are the supplications of Messiah in agony, under the burden of the imputed guilt of man. David's songs of triumph and thanksgiving are Messiah's songs of triumph and thanksgiving for his victory over sin, and death, and hell. In a word, there is not a page of this book of Psalms in which the pious reader will not find his Saviour, if he reads with a view of finding him."

"— the spirit of Jehovah, described by David's utterance what was known to that spirit only, and that spirit only could describe. So that, if David be allowed to have had any knowledge of the true subject of his own compositions, it was nothing in his own life, but something put into his mind by the holy spirit of God; and the misapplication of the Psalms to the literal David has done more mischief than the misapplication of any other parts of the Scriptures, among those who profess the belief of the Christian religion."

Again:

"Some [of the Psalms] are ænigmatic, delivering the doctrines of religion in ænigmata, contrived to strike the imagination forcibly, and yet easy to be understood. In all these, the author delivers the whole matter in his own person. But a very great, I believe the far greater part are a sort of dramatic ode, consisting of dialogues between persons sustaining certain characters. In these dialogue-Psalms the persons are frequently the Psalmist himself, or the chorus of Priests and Levites, or the leader of the Levitical band, opening the ode with a proem declarative of the subject, and very often closing the whole with a solemn admonition drawn from what other persons say. The other persons are Jehovah, sometimes as one, sometimes as another of the three persons; Christ in his incarnate state,

sometimes before, sometimes after, his resurrection; the human soul of Christ as distinguished from the Divine essence. Christ, in his incarnate state, is personated sometimes as a priest, sometimes as a king, sometimes a conqueror; &c."

Specimens of the Bishop's annotations, must now be placed before the reader:

Ps. xxv. 14, [in the Eng. vers. 13.] "his soul shall rest in bliss," *pernoctabit*. "The words seem to allude to the happy state of the good man's departed soul, while his posterity prosper in the present world; unless, indeed *the earth* or *the land* be put mystically for the true land of promise,—the Canaan of the future life; in which case, the sense will be, that both the good man himself shall rest in bliss, and his seed also, his mystical seed, those whom he shall instruct in the way of the Lord, and bring to be his children in goodness, shall inherit the promised land of everlasting happiness."

"Upon mature consideration, however, I am persuaded that this verse is spoken of Messiah. I take the whole plan of the psalm to be thus:"

"In the first twelve verses, the man Christ Jesus, (or, in the Hutchinsonian phrase, the humanity of Christ), prays to the Trinity. In the first three, to the word to which the humanity was united for support. In the 4th and 5th to the Holy Spirit to instruct and guide him. In the 6th, 7th and 8th, to God the Father, to spare him. The imputed guilt of man, in verse 7th, he speaks of as his own, because it was imputed to him. But what, it may be asked, were the trespasses and disobediences of Messiah's youth, which he requests may not be remembered? I agree with Mr. Hutchinson, that *the sins of my youth* [consult the original word], may be the sins, *Juniorum*, of his younger brethren, i. e. of Christians. In the 9th, 10th and 11th verses Messiah celebrates the mercy of Jehovah to the faithful. In the 12th, he prays for the deliverance of the true Israel from its afflicted state."

"In the 13th verse, a voice of one of the angelic choir, who has observed the extraordinary piety and devotion of the man, Christ Jesus, asks with admiration, what man is this who so perfectly feareth God? and prophesies in the last line of this and in the following verse, of the bliss that awaits him; and that his seed shall inherit the earth, which will be literally fulfilled in the millenary period. In the 15th verse, the same voice declares, that the true knowledge of God is with them that fear him, who are taught by Divine revelation. In the 16th verse,



the humanity of Christ takes up his prayer again to the Divine word, or perhaps to the Godhead generally, for support and deliverance, and this prayer is continued to the end of the Psalm."

These paragraphs illustrate the principle and the style of the criticism pervading the volumes before us. So, on the 29th Psalm the Bishop observes that, "taken literally," it "seems to describe the effect of a great storm, from which, however, the people of Israel were providentially protected. But," adds he, "I have no doubt that the storm is mystical, describing the violent conflict between the gospel and its opponents in the latter ages." In the remainder of this article we shall animadvert on the quotations that we have made: we shall present our readers with an example of Bishop Horsley's best manner of translating, and with one of his worst; and we shall conclude by offering some observations on a few passages in the Book of Psalms.

When our Lord was on the point of taking his leave of his apostles, "he said unto them, 'These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you; that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me.'\*" According to the hypothesis of the late Bishop of St. Asaph, the reading should be, "which were written in *all*, or *nearly all* the Psalms." No supposition can be more arbitrary than what is here formed by this writer: it has neither external testimony nor intrinsic probability for its basis, but contradicts both. The prelate's language betrays the weakness of his hypothesis. Is it conceivable that Dr. Horsley and the admirers of his mystical expositions partake not of the "dullness of the faculties of the natural man upon spiritual subjects?" Or is it only when "the pious reader" examines the Psalms, "with the view of finding his Saviour," that he will discover "in every page of this book" the object of his search?

This author professes to be better acquainted than preceding translators and expositors with the meaning of the Psalms. Whence, it is reasonable to ask, did he obtain this superior know-

ledge and discernment? His assertions are peremptory and unqualified. By what evidence does he establish them? We perceive none: and we are not yet prepared for subscribing implicitly to the *dogmata* of Bishop Horsley. It is not our practice to search for recondite senses when the signification is direct and obvious. No presumption can well be stronger than that the Psalms of David, Asaph, &c. relate, for the most part, either to the individual history of those authors or to the state of the civil and religious community of which they were members. This consideration therefore affords a *general* rule for interpreting them: and with this principle the exceptions to it must not be confounded. The expositions offered by Dr. H. are almost completely mystical and allegorical: and when Fancy thus usurps the province of a sound and sober Judgment, the Scriptures have no longer a precise and definite meaning, but are made to speak a various and even discordant language, according to the imagination of the reader.

With no propriety does this translator lay stress on the terms in which "King David, at the close of his life, describes himself and his sacred songs:"—

'David, the son of Jesse, said, and the man who was raised upon high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel, said, the spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.\*' "It was the word, therefore, of Jehovah's spirit which was uttered by David's tongue. But it should seem the spirit of Jehovah would not be wanting to enable a mere man to make complaint of *his own enemies*, to describe *his own sufferings just as he felt them*, and *his own escapes just as they happened*."

Here Bishop Horsley arbitrarily takes for granted that in this passage David asserts the *general* inspiration of his sacred poems; though the claim is manifestly restricted to the prophetic effusion of which these verses are the preamble.

That the Psalms are misapplied to "the literal David," has not yet been shewn: and it is our firm belief that a mystical exposition of them has been signally injurious to the cause of Revelation.

\* Luke xxiv. 44.

\* 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.

The Bishop's note on Ps. xxv. 14, is an example of the manner in which any language may be interpreted agreeably to an assumed hypothesis: Even to his translation we must object, as exhibiting a disregard to the Hebrew idiom. Those of our readers who are in any degree conversant with the Oriental dialects, will instantly perceive the correctness of Mudge's version, "*his own self shall rest quiet in plenty.*" We add the first sentence of the note of C. Rosenmüller, "*ipse, ut alias crebro, loquendi usu, etiam Arabibus recepto.*"

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He made us, and his are we;  
His people and the flock of his pasture.
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And the work we take in hand direct for us,  
The work we take in hand do thou direct."

The omission of the word *during* in the second clause of the fifteenth verse, the substitution of the technical yet vague, unmeaning noun *operation* in that which follows, and the use of the terms *sweet savour* in ver. 17 (not to speak of the paraphrastical and ambiguous expression, *the work we take in hand*), betray a greater love of novelty than of accuracy. On consulting the original, we would render the former clause of the sixteenth verse thus:

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wants and manners; at least, there is no evidence to this effect. Translate the clause then, "Jacob was a man *UNIFORM in his way of life.*" While the pursuits of Esau, as *a man of the field*, were greatly varied, those of Jacob, *dwelling in tents*, were few and similar to each other: he was a shepherd and perhaps a herdsman, but nothing more. Thus the force of the original term is preserved, and a consistent, intelligible sense, given to the passage.

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In No. I. (from Matt. xi. 25,—“ I thank thee, O Father, &c.”) Dr. P. discourses “ on the character of the apostles and first disciples of Christ, and the wisdom of preferring them to the more learned and wealthy men of the world in propagating his religion.” The preacher’s intention is to shew who are meant by the wise and prudent as opposed to babes; and then to inquire upon what particular reasons our Lord’s thanksgiving on this occasion is founded. By *babes* we are evidently to understand such men as the “ apostles and first disciples:” these were likely to be free from all the prejudices of the wise and learned, and therefore would necessarily be more open to instruction, and less in danger of mixing any thing foreign and corrupt with the Christian doctrine. It was essential, too, that the persons whom our Saviour chose for the purpose of diffusing his gospel should attend him constantly during the time of his ministry. Besides, there is scarcely an argument for Christianity which does not receive additional strength from the consideration of the meanness of the instruments by which it was established in the world.

“ But there is reason to think,” says the preacher, “ that what I have hitherto insisted upon, is not all that our Lord had in view in the words I am considering. By the wise and the prudent, he meant not merely such as possessed the wisdom and learning of the times, but also the men who were proud and conceited on that account, and under the influence of those vices which are sometimes united to wit and learning. By babes, on the contrary, it is evident, that he meant not merely persons destitute of the wisdom of this world, but also the meek, the modest and humble. . . . He did not mean to prefer ignorance to true knowledge, or a weak to a sound judgment. It would be in the highest degree unreasonable to suppose this. But his intention was to express a preference of honesty and simplicity without learning, to learning without honesty and simplicity.”

In illustration of his comment, Dr. Price appeals to Matt. xviii. 1, 2, 3, “ Except ye be converted, and become as little children, &c.” The whole of this able and useful discourse is admirably calculated to evince the truth of the gospel, and to recommend it’s

characteristic temper. In the following sentences we discern the spirit of the preacher :

“ The best disposition of heart may be joined to the richest furniture in the head. We may be children in respect of modesty, and lowliness, and teachableness, and yet men in understanding. We may be knowing and learned in the highest degree, and, at the same time, humble, meek, candid, and void of guile and prejudice.”

Such was Dr. Price himself! We could wish this discourse to be repeatedly and attentively perused by every minister of religion, every student and every private Christian.

The next in order (from 1 Corinth. xiii. 11. “ When I was a child, &c.”) is on the “ analogy between our present state and a state of childhood.” For example,

“ Our present existence, compared with our future, is a childhood in respect of it’s duration, of improvement, and of power and dignity: it answers also to the idea of a childhood, as it is an introduction to, and a state of education for, another and a higher state. Man’s existence is progressive. This life educates us for another by means of the instruction and the habits which are the necessary consequence to all of passing through the present world. As children are trained up by restraint and correction, the tendency of which they do not see, and which therefore they are apt to think hard and severe, so it is with us as probationers and candidates for eternity.— This account of human life, leads us to reflect on the wisdom of God, in ordering the scenes of our existence. It should teach us patience under the trials of life, and reconcile us to all present difficulties. And hence we should be rendered earnest in our endeavours to make this life what it is designed,—a preparation for a better life. Lastly, we should bless God for giving us our present existence—the first step (so we may make it, through God’s help) of an endless progress in dignity and happiness.

“ This is indeed,” says the preacher, “ a transporting prospect. But remember, brethren, that the more transporting it is, the more alarming is the reflection, that, like the prospect granted to Moses, on mount Pisgah, of the land of Canaan, it is a prospect of happiness that there is danger of losing. God’s goodness in giving us our existence is, I have said, unspeakable. But it is a gift that may possibly be withdrawn. Vice throws a cloud over this extatic prospect. The loss of those thoughts that wander through



eternity may be the appointed punishment of a course of wickedness. Some indeed assert the contrary, and tell us, that through the great Redeemer there will be (after a series of future punishments) a final restitution of all to happiness. Nothing can be more agreeable to my wishes and feelings than such a doctrine. But I must not suffer my wishes to command my conviction. I want more evidence in this case. Though eternal torments cannot take place under the government of a benevolent Deity,—final destruction may. I tremble, indeed, when I make these reflections. I am frightened when I think of the possibility of their being just!"

*Everlasting punishment* however and "eternal torments" are distinct considerations. There is, to say the least, a possibility that privation, that inferiority of rank, improvement and excellence, may be an *everlasting* consequence of habits of sin. Now this, assuredly, is *punishment*. Men may be punished even when it would be inaccurate to affirm that they are tormented, either physically or mentally. This remark, if we mistake not, will go far towards settling a voluminous controversy, and vindicating and illustrating the language of the sacred writers.

The third and fourth sermons (from Matt. vii. 21. "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, &c.") are "on the greater importance of right practice than of a sound faith in religion." From the text Dr. Price discourses on "the nature, the evidence, the importance, and the consequences of the following truth, *that there is nothing fundamental in religion besides sincerely desiring to know, and faithfully doing the will of God.*" Had more than this been fundamental, our Lord would certainly not have expressed himself as he does in the above passage. A sincere desire to know and to do God's will, is a sure preservative from all dangerous error: a disposition to receive whatever information he is pleased to give us, may be considered as equivalent in every instance to a right belief. The very purpose of all religious principles is to produce this temper of mind. And if faith were more essential than practice, dreadful would be the condition of human beings. Our acceptance, in this case, would be connected with things entirely out of

our power, and on which our wills could have no influence. Numberless diversities of opinion prevail among mankind. Yet experience teaches us that true worth and piety are not confined to any one religious sect. Still, there is an important difference between doctrines. And though our acceptance does not depend on our taking always the right side, it does however depend on our taking always that side which appears to us to be right, and not leaving ourselves to be carried away carelessly to a conformity in religion that our hearts disapprove.

Obvious and important are the uses of the doctrine inculcated in these two discourses. It is fitted to administer great comfort to us, amidst the darkness of this world, and the diversities of opinion among our fellow Christians. In the next place, it has a tendency to promote our charity. Could it be instilled into every heart, it would root out of the world all intolerance and persecution, and, consequently, do the greatest service to society. But, while we avoid narrowness, we should take care to retain piety: while our religion is liberal, it should, at the same time, be ardent.

"Whatever is fundamental," adds Dr. Price, "is so evident that it must be universally received." Accordingly, of the propositions "that Christ was sent of God to be the Saviour of the world—that he worked miracles—rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven—that he will hereafter appear to judge the world, and that through him mankind will then be raised from death—the wicked punished, and the virtuous established in a glorious immortality"—this preacher affirms, "these are fundamental doctrines of Christianity;—that is, they are so plainly revealed that they are not capable of being denied by any who receive the gospel history."

The subject of the fifth sermon (from Philippi. iv. 11. "I have learned, in whatever state I am, &c."), is *contentment*. This virtue Dr. Price recommends from the consideration of our duty to God, and our condition as the subjects of his perfect government; from the contrast of our afflictions with our comforts; from the tendency of discontent to level the creation, and to sow uneasiness among all the inferior ranks of beings; from our unworthiness and guilt; from the design

and nature of the present state; from the reflection that the wisest and the best of men have frequently been obliged to struggle with dreadful evils, and that they may not have exceeded us more in the excellence of their characters than in their difficulties and trials; from the short duration of this life, compared with that for which we are ultimately intended; and from the happiness which contentment produces, and the misery occasioned by its absence.

In the sixth discourse (from Jer. xxiii, 24. "Can any hide himself in secret places, &c.") *the omnipresence of God* is considered: proofs are given of this attribute, and observations offered respecting the manner of it; and the influence which it ought to have on our tempers and conduct is then stated.

God's omnipresence is implied in his being the cause and author of all things. Not only must his presence be coextensive with his works, but they owe their preservation to this presence. The necessity by which the Deity exists, can have no relation to one place more than another; while the idea of an unoriginated Being justly supposes that there can be nothing to limit him.

As to the manner of God's omnipresence—he is present with us, in all we think, as well as in all we do—he is present with us not only by his notice and his influence, but by his sense—and in a mode in which no other being can be present with us. God is present alike in all places; as much on earth as he is in heaven. The Scriptural phraseology which describes the Deity as being in heaven, is intended chiefly to express his supreme dominion and sovereign authority. Thus, the expression that Christ is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God, certainly signifies no more than that he is exalted to dominion under God; or, as it is elsewhere expressed, that all power is given him in heaven and earth.

Since God is equally present every where, we ought not to imagine that our worship of him can be more acceptable in one place than another. Hence also it follows that there can be no other Being who is the proper object of our prayers. The consideration of the constant and intimate presence of the Deity with us, ought

to encourage us in our addresses to him. A reverential fear of God should continually possess us; inasmuch as he is always with us. The thought of his presence should deter us from sin. It should support us in the performance of our duty, and quicken us in a virtuous course: and, finally, it should encourage and comfort us under every pain and trouble.

This is a very eloquent, ingenious and useful sermon, but fairly exposed, at the same time, to some objections. Part of it, as Dr. Price himself seems to have been sensible, is metaphysical, speculative and abstruse. The clearest, the most practical and advantageous view which can be exhibited of the omnipresence of the Deity, we take to be the following: that *there is no spot where his perfections—his power, wisdom and goodness—are not manifested*. When we are told that God is present with us "in all abstract truths and possibles," and that "his sense penetrates our's," we in vain endeavour to affix to this language any distinct and satisfactory ideas; and, for the moment, we believe that we are listening to a Platonic philosopher rather than a Christian preacher. The method, too, of this discourse, might perhaps have been improved: "the proofs of God's omnipresence," might have succeeded more naturally and conveniently to a statement of the proposition which they were designed to establish. And we are mistaken if the preacher has not in some degree confounded two subjects which, on the principles of sound reasoning, should be separately considered—the immensity of creation and the universal presence of the Deity.

*Self-examination* is the important topic of the seventh sermon (from Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24. "Search me, O God, &c."). The indifference of multitudes to this practice, and the vast moment of it, Dr. Price represents with great fidelity and impressiveness. He then mentions two points which demand our particular notice in the work of self-investigation: these are the purity of our motives and the universality of our obedience. And he concludes by laying down three rules for the performance of the duty. We should examine ourselves frequently, impartially and devoutly. No day should be suffered to pass without some self-inquiry. When



thus engaged, we should divest ourselves, as far as possible, of all biasses which may lead us astray: and we should regard ourselves as in the presence of that Being who knows our hearts; and should pray to him for his assistance in this employment.

May we be permitted to subjoin a division more strictly textual of the passage on which Dr. Price has treated in this discourse?

From the words, "Search me, &c." we learn,

i. That the state of men's religious characters, entirely depends on the nature of the principles and motives by which they are actuated; and it is therefore of the utmost consequence to know what these principles and motives are;

ii. That, while we are ardently engaged in the business or the pleasures of life, it is often a task of much difficulty to trace the motives of our actions;

iii. That, when we attempt to examine them, we are subject, from various causes, to much error in the scrutiny: and it is possible that, while we imagine ourselves to be influenced by good motives, we really are actuated by some which are improper and criminal. There may be in us some *wicked way*; but

iv. That by the frequent submission of ourselves to the Divine investigation in our hours of retirement, we shall be well prepared to ascertain the purity of our views, to lay the foundation of righteousness of character, and to be led into *the way everlasting*."

The eighth discourse (from Gal. vi. 4. "But let every man prove his own work, &c.") is "on having our rejoicing in ourselves." In considering what it is in ourselves which is the proper foundation of our happiness, it may be observed in general that it must be grounded on the good order of the mind, and of its powers and affections: this happiness is "the result of a commanding reason and obedient passions, of an applauding conscience and an honest heart, of a mind satisfied with itself, and possessing health, order and independence; of a temper formed by the generous affections, of contentment, resignation, trust in God, a sense of his love, the belief that all is well under his government, and the hope of surviving death, and of being raised up hereafter through the power of Christ to a life of unchangeable and ever-increasing happiness;" and the

advantages of this happiness are that it is firm and stable, pure and elevated.

In the concluding paragraphs of this sermon a fine contrast is drawn between the state of the good and that of the wicked man: we lament that our limits do not permit us to place it before our readers.

One of the most admirable discourses in the volume, is the ninth, "on the ignorance of man, and the proper improvement of it." From the very pertinent text, Job viii. 9, "For we are but of yesterday and know nothing," Dr. Price lays before his hearers and readers a general representation of the imperfection of our knowledge. We know, for instance, little of ourselves, of our bodies and our minds, of the reason why our wills instantaneously produce motion in our members, of the connection between certain impressions on our organs of sense, and the sensations which follow them, of the original springs of animal life within us, the laws of union between the soul and the body, the nature of death, and the particular state into which it puts us. Further; we know little of this earth and its constitution and furniture. Almost all that we see of things is their outsides. We cannot discern a millionth part of the art and workmanship in the lowest plant. Still less do we know of the solar system, and next to nothing of the universe. There are numberless systems besides this in which our lot is cast, many of them probably more grand and beautiful. Even could we take in the complete prospect of God's works, there would yet remain unknown, adds the preacher, "an infinity of abstract truths and possibilities." Again; though the course of events is under the best direction, we are very ignorant of the plan and conduct of Divine Providence in the government of the universe. Of our ideas of the Deity himself it is nothing to say that they are imperfect and inadequate: they are doubtless in many particulars highly erroneous. To us his nature and essence are absolutely unfathomable. Taken all together, our knowledge bears just the same proportion to our ignorance that an instant does to eternity, or a point, to immensity. And this imperfection of our knowledge is plainly

owing to the narrowness of our faculties, the lateness of our existence, and our confined situation. However, a sense of our ignorance ought to teach us the profoundest humility: it should answer many of our objections against Providence, and reconcile us to the orders and appointments of nature: it instructs us to give up our affairs to the direction of higher wisdom: it should lead us to be contented with any real evidence which we can procure on every subject; and it should direct our hopes and wishes to that future world, where full day will break in upon our souls.

The tenth sermon (from Heb. xi. 16. "But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly,") is an exhortation on the subject of *heavenly-mindedness*. In the first place, the nature and the magnitude of that bliss which is reserved for good men in the celestial regions are contrasted with our situation in the present world; and an earthly-minded temper, with the contrary disposition. Next, the advantages of a heavenly temper, with respect to our present interest, are pointed out; and, then, the particular obligations that we are under to cultivate it, as Christ's disciples.

"Is it visionary," asks this eloquent preacher, "to expect a better world? . . . This is what some tell us. Such infidelity is the greatest misfortune; and those who make a boast of it, and labour to make converts to it, deserve our scorn, as men who are traitors to our species."

[To be concluded in the next No.]

ART. III.—*Religious Liberty Stated and Enforced, on the Principles of Scripture and Common Sense. In Six Essays. With Notes, &c. By Thomas Williams. 8vo. pp. 228. Williams and Co.*

THE author informs us, in a prefatory advertisement, that the substance of these "Essays was originally delivered in the form of Lectures before the Christian Philological Society." This in some measure accounts for the disappointment we felt in perusing them as Essays on Religious Liberty. They are evidently a collection of papers composed at different times and on various subjects, some of them having only a remote connection with that of Religious Liberty, and alto-

gether wanting that unity of design which the title of the book seems to require. Perhaps our readers will be better apprised of the nature of this work by its table of contents, than by its title-page, which we therefore extract.

"Essay I.—On the Principles on which the Christian Church is founded.

II.—The Original Terms of Church Communion.

III.—The Duty of Inquiry and the Right of Private Judgment and Free Discussion.

IV.—The Spiritual Nature of Christ's Kingdom.

V.—The Nature and Effects of Intolerance in Religion.

VI.—Historic Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Intolerance and Persecution.

Conclusion.—Present State and Final Overthrow of Popery."

By "Religious Liberty," we understand the perfect freedom of every person to adopt such religious opinions and practise such religious worship as appear to his own judgment most acceptable to God, without sustaining from his fellow men any inconvenience or restraints on that account, provided his practice is no wise injurious to his neighbours. The justice of such a social arrangement respecting religion, is, we think, most convincingly and sufficiently proved, in an inestimable little book (not one quarter the size of Mr. W.'s), entitled, "A Letter on Toleration, by John Locke, Esq." And we rejoice that at least in one part of the world, the United States of America, the civil government have put the theory to the test of experiment, and it has been found productive of none of those mischiefs, which the advocates of hoary establishments, with restraints and disabilities for their protection, have so long denounced as inseparable from universal liberty of conscience.

Our author, however, has mixed up with this subject, the question of free communion among different sects of Christians, and also a long detail of various instances of persecution, from the first establishment of Christianity, down to the recent outrages suffered by the Protestants in the South of France; and by the aid of a great many long quotations from Dr. Owen, Mr. Robert Hall, Messrs. Fuller, Robinson, Haldane, Cobbin, and the Reports of the Committee of the Three Denominations of Dissenting Ministers, he has contrived to make a very re-



spectable and saleable volume. We are happy on the whole to observe many things scattered amidst this multifarious collection, that may be useful, if duly considered, to the party (the Calvinists) with whom the writer is connected. The following extracts are of this description :

"It is a great mistake for persons to suppose that they are believers in Christianity, because they have had no doubts; ignorance alone presumes on the truth of principles without inquiry."—P. 41.

"I cannot but censure the language too often used in the pulpit, when preachers recommend certain doctrines, with the assurance of their being true, without condescending to lay before their hearers the evidences on which they are founded. But for ministers to venture so far as to pledge, not only their word, but their *soul*, for the truth of their assertions, is not only ridiculous, but profane."—P. 43.

We think so, and believe such profanity is only to be found among those fanatical teachers, to whose efforts the present popularity of what is falsely called Evangelical preaching is chiefly owing. It is a promising symptom of improvement, when even their friends begin to see and rebuke their absurdities. Mr. W. is an advocate for free communion among different denominations of Christians, but he repeatedly alludes to a class of persons that he thinks ought to be excluded. We select one of these passages for the sake of correcting a very prevalent mistake among the Orthodox, and to point out an improper and injurious, though very usual, way of quoting the Scriptures among them.

"Where (God) has sent the Scriptures, and on points on which those Scriptures are express and full, and especially on such as concern the great essentials of the gospel, and affect the vitals of practical religion, error grows to heresy—and even to damnable heresy—in those that 'deny the Lord that bought them, and put him to an open shame.' Indeed the worst consequences of heresy are its practical effects, degrading the Saviour, blaspheming the Holy Spirit, perverting the way of salvation, or debasing the moral purity of truth; in all which cases it becomes painfully necessary to make an excision of the member, &c."—p. 64, 65.

Now it is well understood who are meant when the Orthodox use these terms; but as Mr. W. seems to be not destitute of candour (which we shall

shew in another quotation presently), we shall venture to make an observation or two, which may be useful to him and his readers. All the Orthodox consider the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, and a vicarious atonement for sin, as "great essentials of the gospel," and they think the Scriptures "express and full" on these subjects. A great number, however, of very diligent inquirers, cannot see any thing at all in the Scriptures which will prove the truth of any one of these doctrines; and so far from their being "great essentials," they conceive them to be mere human traditions, and quite incompatible with some of the plainest truths both in natural and revealed religion. On this account they are charged with "denying the Lord that bought them;" whereas in fact they do not deny Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, but glory in that faith, as the symbol of their high calling, owning no other Lord and Master in religious truths but him. However, they deny that he is the great God, the Creator of heaven and earth; and they have not the smallest thought of degrading him, when they speak of him in his own language, as "the sent of the Father," and in the language of the Apostle Peter, as "a man approved of God, by signs, wonders and miracles, which God did by him." They know that he has "a name given him which is above every name," excepting the name of him whom he himself has called, "my Father and your Father, my God and your God."

Whether their fellow Christians will commune with them or not, is a matter of small importance to Unitarians; they only ask not to be misrepresented. Furthermore, we wish to admonish Mr. W. that there is no such a text in Scripture as that he has marked for a quotation, "deny the Lord that bought them, and put him to an open shame." We refer Mr. W. to his own rule, in his Appendix, p. 216 :

"Scripture may be easily perverted and debased, by detaching the members of a sentence from each other, and thereby dislocating the sense."

He has afforded this illustration of his own rule in more than one place of his book. The former part of his quotation is found in 2 Pet. ii. 1; but the *Lord* mentioned there does not mean Jesus Christ, but is the same as

in a corresponding passage is called "the only Lord God," Jude 4, who is there expressly distinguished from "our Lord Jesus Christ." Indeed *δεσποτην* is not used in the New Testament in application to our Saviour, but always to the Father. The latter words above quoted, "put him to an open shame," are dislocated from another text, Heb. vi. 6.

In a similar strain Mr. W. afterwards, reprobating the error of some persons respecting, what he conceives, the true doctrine of Divine influence, says of them—

"The Scriptures represent such as 'aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise'."  
—P. 66.

But where do the Scriptures represent any who believe in the Divine mission of Jesus, in this language? No where. Mr. W. knows that they do not: and that the Apostle has pointedly restricted this language, Eph. ii. 11, 12, to idolaters, before they heard the word of the truth of the gospel. Let the Scriptures be appealed to fairly, and suffered to speak their own language, and not the language of bigotry.

We proceed now to a quotation on which we ground our opinion of Mr. W.'s candour; and indeed we are so little accustomed to receive any thing like credit for sincerity and honesty in our profession as Unitarians, from our Calvinistic neighbours, that we hail the most transient gleam of liberality from that quarter as a symptom of improvement. Speaking of blasphemy, and the punishments denounced against it by the Jewish law, he says:

"However criminal the idolatry of Papists may be, in the sight of God, yet as they profess to direct all their worship *ultimately* to the Supreme Being (and we cannot search the heart), and to reverence the true God, I do not think the Mosaic law could be applied to them, were it even now in force. So as to the Socinians, however our feelings may be hurt by the irreverent manner in which they too often speak of our Saviour, I can by no means charge them with violating the Jewish law as blasphemy: *I believe they act from conviction, and do not intentionally degrade Jesus Christ below what they consider to be his true character*, though I cannot but strongly censure the manner in which they sometimes write and speak."—Pp. 85, 86.

Mr. W. judges righteous judgment, when he admits that "we do not intentionally degrade Jesus Christ;" and we earnestly wish he had adduced some instances of what he thinks "the irreverent manner in which *we* speak of the Saviour." The Unitarians wish to exculpate themselves from this charge. We suspect that many of those who allege it, are not personally acquainted with their usual mode of speaking and writing on this subject. And if a few individuals should, under the name of Unitarians, have said or written foolish and irreverent things, let not this be charged upon the body, unless the Calvinists also are willing to be responsible for all the absurdities and impieties, which they cannot deny are weekly poured forth among the lower classes of that sect.

But to return to the quotation just made: Mr. W. could not have hit upon a more unlucky topic upon which to shew his candour towards the Unitarians (or Socinians as he chuses to call them); for let the Mosaic law concerning blasphemy be enforced with all its rigour, and they of all Christians have least to fear, while that law should be administered by upright judges. The first commandment of all—"Hear O Israel! the Lord our God is *one Lord*," and "Thou shalt have none other God before me," constitutes the very basis of their whole system, and makes them tremble at the thought of giving his glory to another. But what would a strict interpreter of the Jewish law say to one who should be arraigned before him on the charge of ascribing Divine attributes and rendering Divine worship to a person, who himself repeatedly and distinctly disclaimed them both, and had besides personified and even deified the energy of the Creator and Preserver of mankind, for the sake of making it appear, that it might be as properly said, "The Lord our God is *three Gods*," as it is to say that he is "one Lord." And be it remembered, that although when Jesus had said what the mistaken Jews interpreted to mean equality with God, they were about to stone him as a blasphemer; in all the persecutions of his followers, recorded in the New Testament, it is never mentioned as one of their offences, that they worshipped Jesus as equal with the Father.

One more subject we have to notice



before we dismiss the present article. Mr. W. observes in his Appendix, p. 220,

"Much has been said by some of the duty of charity to the opinions of others; but I have no charity for *opinions*, nor do I know of such a duty in the Christian code. To the *persons* of all men, however they may differ from us, we owe Christian charity; but what is meant by charity to opinions? Am I to believe that to be true which I am convinced is false? &c. &c."

To all this we have no objection: it expresses, on the whole, our own views. The use we are going to make of it is to shew that on the very same leaf where these remarks occur, Mr. W. has given proof that he either does not understand, or will not steadily adhere to his own rules. In a note to p. 219, he says:

"The following is a specimen of language most intemperate and extravagant: the succeeding note will form its counterpart. The doctrine of the Trinity 'is the parent stock of all that system of error which has branched out into all the various forms of reputed orthodoxy, darkening with its deadly shade the brightness of the Divine character, and shedding its poisonous influences upon the best charities of human nature.'—*Madge's Sermon before the Unitarian Fund*, 1815, p. 13."

What Mr. W. considers as the counterpart of this quotation, he adduces in a note to the next page (220):

"Much and often have I been shocked at the horrid cut of flames and devils prefixed to Macgowan's 'Arian's and Socinian's Monitor,' which, it must be confessed, however, is very appropriate to the tract itself. Take the following specimen. 'No sooner (says the damned heretic) was I within these frightful mansions, but *Arius* and *Socius* were apprised of my coming, by fresh bolts of divine indignation being thundered against their apostate heads.' This language, also, is so far appropriate, that it must be confessed it is fit only for the *infernal* regions! And yet we are told at the beginning of the tract, this mode of writing was chosen with a view to make it the more *entertaining*! Most horrible! a picture of hell, and the damnation of a Christian teacher, for the *entertainment* of pious Christians. It is impossible to calculate the injury such books render to religion."

We are perfectly of Mr. W.'s opinion in this, and heartily rejoice that the Calvinists themselves begin to be horror-stricken with their own system,

when it is stripped of every disguise, and set before them in all its naked deformity. But now let us ask, in the name of candour and good sense, what is there in the quotation from Mr. Madge's sermon that deserves to be placed in parallel with Macgowan's vulgar and malignant abuse? Mr. Madge has no charity for the Trinitarian *opinions*: and Mr. W. himself avows that he knows of no Christian precept that requires *charity for opinions*. But when has Mr. Madge, or indeed any Unitarian, ever sentenced any one Trinitarian or Calvinist to the regions of the damned, on account of their creed? No, such usurpations of the Divine prerogative are only to be found among our opponents.

After all, we think this Book may be useful to many of the author's Orthodox friends, and on that account we consider it a seasonable and salutary publication. We are persuaded that few of the books they are most accustomed to read, contain so many liberal and useful observations.

ART. IV.—*The Regards due to the Memory of Faithful Ministers.* A Sermon preached at Stourbridge and Cradley, Dec. 8, 1816, on the Death of the Rev. Benjamin Carpenter: to which is added an Address delivered at the interment. By James Scott. Stourbridge: Printed and sold by J. Heming: Sold also by Sherwood and Co. London, &c. 8vo. pp. 36.

IN the concluding sentence of our review of Mr. Carpenter's Discourses on *Christian Peace and Unity*, we expressed our persuasion that his "life and character" would promote the important objects for which he pleads.\* That valuable life, alas! was soon to be terminated: that exemplary character, such is the will of Providence, now lives only in our recollection. Amidst the pursuits of theological literature, and the collisions of controversy, we are feelingly reminded of the limits of human views, the precariousness of mortal life and the supreme moment of practical religion. It was impossible to regard Mr. Carpenter personally with any other emotions than those of affection and respect. Such were the virtues of the man that, in the

eyes of those who knew him, they might aid his reasoning as a polemical divine: and hence it became necessary to point out strongly the incorrectness of many of his statements and the invalidity of many of his deductions. His temper, assuredly, was highly candid. But if a man so benevolent and so catholic could, on some occasions, speak both harshly and unjustly of any of his fellow Christians, it was still more obligatory on them to expose those errors of the judgment with which his language in reference to Unitarians appeared to be associated.

Mr. Scott has presented the public with an appropriate, a sensible and a serious discourse on the death of his friend and colleague. The pamphlet before us, may be read with much advantage, both by ministers and their several congregations. A short account is given of the origin and successive pastors of the Presbyterian society at Stourbridge: and we shall be thankful if the worthy author will frame his sketch of Mr. Carpenter's life and character into a memoir adapted to the biographical department of our Repository.\*

The text selected by Mr. Scott, is Heb. xiii. 7. "Remember those who have the rule over you, &c." *Strong evidence*, he thinks, "might be adduced to warrant the conclusion" that the Apostle Paul was the author of this epistle. The question, after all, is undetermined. Perhaps the weight of evidence may be on the other side: perhaps Mr. S. may be of this opinion, when he has reconsidered the arguments of Michaelis.†

This preacher paraphrases one verse of his context as follows:

*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*, "having an unchangeable Priesthood;" and the Christian doctrine being "immutable in it's nature, and of perpetual value and efficacy."

We regret that we cannot speak in favourable terms of the typographical execution of these pages.

ART. V.—*A History of Religious Persecutions, from the Apostolic Age to the Present Time; and of the Inquisition of Spain, Portugal and Goa.* By F. B. Wright. Liverpool. 1816. 8vo. pp. 434. Longman and Co.

THE character and design of this publication is fully expressed in the following extract from the advertisement prefixed to it:

"The following work is published chiefly with a view to that class of readers, who may not have either leisure or opportunity to peruse larger publications on similar subjects."

—"To aid the cause of freedom of opinion—to promote liberality of sentiment and conduct, and to create an abhorrence for every species of persecution is the design of the writer."

In prosecuting this laudable design, Mr. W. has compiled from various sources, a mass of information which is well adapted to produce a powerful effect on the description of readers for whom he has laboured. This information is indeed now widely circulated, not only in the works of those authors by whom it was originally detailed, but by various periodical publications which in our country convey to almost the lowest classes of society, knowledge that was formerly the exclusive possession of the rich and learned. We have no objection to the multiplication of books of this description, for in so vast a population, and amidst so many popular prejudices, it is probable that every author and Editor, will have access to some individuals, whose eyes would be otherwise closed to the atrocious scenes of wickedness and inhumanity, which intolerance and religious bigotry have exhibited. For ourselves, we have so sickened at the recitals of the infamous brutality of holy-men and holy-offices, that we can hardly reconcile ourselves to the re-perusal of the descriptions of the doleful prisons and infernal cruelties of the inquisition. Yet it is desirable that these horrors should be well known to the inhabitants of this country, at a period when one of the most striking features of *Europe's deliverance*, after an immense expenditure of blood and treasure for twenty years, is the re-establishment of that detestable tribunal, which that arch-heretic

\* This was written by the Reviewer without knowledge of the Biographical Article inserted in the beginning of the present Number. Ed.

† Introd. &c. Vol. IV. pp. 245—258.



Bonaparte had suppressed, not having the fear of priests and cardinals before his eyes.

It is of great importance also in the present precarious situation of our national affairs, that the people should be universally instructed in the nature of religious liberty, or the right of every man to worship God in the way he chooses, without being subject to any temporal injury whatever on that account. The cause of freedom has gained ground, but many of its professed friends are timid, vacillating, and very partial in their views of its due extension; and desperate will be the struggles of the advocates for religious despotism and priestcraft, before their long usurped power can be finally abolished. We agree with Mr. W. in the last passage of his book—which we extract:

“If earthly legislators have a right to make penal laws respecting religion, any religion, and *all religions* might be proscribed; every person professing to be religious in any way, might be doomed to the dungeon, gibbet, or the stake. If the principle be granted it must be universal, and to any extent. In the present precarious state of things, the friends to unrestricted religious liberty, will do well to be upon their guard against all encroachments that may be made on their rights and liberties. They can never be secure until all penal statutes relating to opinions, and to religious worship are abolished—until there be an unlimited extension of freedom to all parties and all denominations—until toleration be superseded by religious liberty founded on the principles of justice, and recognized as a natural and inalienable right.”

ART. VI.—*Unitarianism a Scriptural Creed; occasioned by the Pamphlets of Mr. Law and Mr. Baxter, in Defence of the Doctrine of the Trinity.* By T. C. Holland, Minister of the Unitarian congregation in Preston. Preston, Printed and Sold by J. Wilcockson: Sold also in London by Hunter and by Eaton. 1816. 8vo. pp. 49.

WE have been much pleased with this little pamphlet, and think it entitled to no mean rank among the lighter controversial publications on the side of Unitarianism. Within a moderate compass the reader is here presented with the substance of many volumes. The writer's arrangement

of his materials, the perspicuity of his style, the correctness and strength of his reasoning, and the becoming temper which he exercises towards his opponents, do him great credit. This performance of Mr. Holland's exhibits the advantages flowing from the union of a sound theological education with vigorous talents: and our author seems likely to maintain the well-earned reputation of his name and family; a name and a family long endeared to the friends of sacred literature and of religious freedom.

It appears that the discussion in which Mr. H. has so honourably engaged arose from some local circumstances detailed in his preface. He speaks of “various writers” as taking a part in it,\* but “particularly” of “Mr. Baxter and Mr. Law, each of whom,” he adds, “has published a pamphlet on this subject.” Of these champions of Trinitarianism, the latter, if we may judge from the following extracts, is far the more respectable:

“To the *rude personal attacks* which abound in Mr. Baxter's pamphlet, it is quite beneath me,” declares his antagonist, “to reply. When he insinuated that Unitarian ministers are, like the heathen soothsayers sanctimonious hypocrites, he surely forgot that the profession of Unitarian Christianity is by no means either a gainful or a popular one.”—27.

“If Mr. Baxter write again, unless his style be very much altered, and he think fit to adhere much more to the argument, I shall certainly not reply to him. To Mr. Law I confess myself under obligations, for the truly Christian spirit which he has displayed in his pamphlet, and by which I hope to profit.”—Pref. iv.

In his chapter on the worship of Jesus Mr. H. makes a manly acknowledgement of an inadvertence of which he had been guilty:

“I had too hastily imagined, not having the means of consulting a concordance of the Greek translation of the Old Testament, that *λειτεργεω* and *λατρευω* were never used in Scripture with respect to men. For the correction of this mistake I am obliged to Mr. Law, but he must himself perceive, that, since he has proved, that both these terms are applied to men, their being applied to

\* We conclude, from the preface, that it was carried on, at first, in “the Preston Chronicle.”

Christ would not shew, that he was any thing more than a man."—42.

These sentences are eminently honourable both to the feelings and the judgment of the writer. He is very successful, too, in proving that most of the passages of Scripture which it is usual to adduce in support of the Trinity contradict that doctrine: and we admire his remark on John xx. 28:—

"Perhaps the speech of Thomas may be considered as elliptical, meaning, this is in truth my Lord, and my God hath indeed raised him from the dead. The reason why I conceive this to be the

correct interpretation is, that the doubt of Thomas was, whether Jesus had actually been raised, and therefore it seems natural to interpret his exclamation, when he saw Jesus, simply as an exclamation of triumph in the certainty that his Lord had actually been raised by his God."—35.

Why does Mr. H., in p. 18, cite "the book of Revelations?" The title, in the original, is in the singular number, *αποκαλυψις*. And is it not too much to say, in p. 27, that the *Improved Version*, &c. is, upon the whole, not approved by Unitarians?

## POETRY.

Sacred to the Memory  
of the

REV. JOHN DISNEY, D. D. F. S. A.

If knowledge, learning, energy of mind,  
Combin'd with manly sense, and judgment  
sound,  
Sincerity and singleness of heart,  
Integrity unmov'd, and truth unaw'd,  
And virtue stern—if rectitude,  
Benevolence, and candour clear as day,  
If these the meed of honest fame demand,  
That meed, O DISNEY! dear departed  
friend,  
Is thine—thine is the wreath that decks  
the brow  
Of such pre-eminence and worth.  
Since, dear to honour, and to virtue dear,  
Thy name's distinguished in renown, shall  
not  
The good and wise thy virtues emulate?  
And when this world's delusions charm  
no more,  
When all its vain distinctions, over-  
thrown,  
Are in oblivion lost—when nought re-  
mains  
But moral worth and mental excellence,  
Then talents and endowments such as  
thine  
Their generous aid and influence shall  
extend  
To ages yet unborn—remembrance sweet  
Shall, round the ashes of the just, diffuse  
its fragrance far and wide—and live,  
cherished  
By friendship's hallow'd flame, bedew'd  
With virtue's consecrated tear.

T. J.

*The Hyde,  
Tuesday, 14th Jan. 1817.*

*Eulogy on Newton.*

(From the Portuguese.)

Newton! thou holy sage! whose soul was  
fill'd  
With wisdom, and whose heart in virtue  
shrin'd—  
(And virtue is the nobler of the twain,  
Aye, nobler than thine own transcendent  
mind  
Which found, or fancied laws for unseen  
worlds!)

Meek, unobtrusive, all-embracing sage!  
Yet humble with an intellect that  
probed  
Th' abyss of nature's mysteries—that  
read  
In the bright noon of thine intelligence  
The secrets of the stars! Thou art not  
spared  
(Say what is spared?) by the ferocious  
fiend,\*  
That, rushing forth from his infernal  
den,  
Scathes truth and knowledge; but thy  
spirit smiles,  
Rapt in the joy of its beatitude,  
Like the firm, sky-top'd cliff upon the  
surge  
That foams and dashes at its foot. Thy  
fame  
Stands like a pyramid!—and where-  
soe'er  
A temple shall be built to wisdom,—  
thine  
Shall its foundations, shall its pillars be.  
O privileg'd Albion! cradle of the wise!  
Throne of the good! assylum of the op-  
prest!

\* The Inquisition.



Lo! regal Tagus shouts thy eulogies:—  
And proudly to th' Atlantic waters wide  
Bears on its golden tide thy praise,—and  
hails  
The light that blazes from thy Newton's  
name,  
Scatt'ring its splendors o'er these distant  
shores.  
E'en I (a lowly one) have brought a  
wreath  
Of song to hang on Newton's sepulchre!  
There shall it flourish, there entwine its  
flow'rs  
With Thomson's worthier off'ring bloom-  
ing there.

A.

*Address to the Deity.*

(From the Portugneze of Bocage.)  
O thou whose bosom holds eternity!  
Whose splendor light to morn—to  
evening lends,

Great, changeless Deity! on whom  
depend—  
All earth's, all heaven's sublime machinery!  
Thou hast an ear for weak humanity,  
That to the suppliant on thy mercy  
bends:  
And I (while anguish this sad bosom  
rends)  
Utter my woes, and seek relief from thee!  
Nature, oppress'd and fainting 'neath her  
load,  
Feebly and fearfully thy smile implores—  
Pity her weakness,—chace her fears O  
God!  
Thou knowest all—faith every hope  
assures:  
Thou knowest that I kiss thy chast'ning  
rod,  
And that my soul, though agoniz'd,  
adores.

A.

## OBITUARY.

Died, on Thursday, December 26th, 1816, at the *Hyde, near Ingatestone, Essex*, the Rev. JOHN DISNEY, D. D. F. S. A. aged 70 years.

Descended from an ancient and respectable family, in Lincolnshire: he was born September 28th, 1746, and successively placed at the grammar schools of Wakefield and Lincoln. Being admitted a pensioner of Peterhouse, in the University of Cambridge, June 15, 1765, he proceeded in 1770, to the degree of Bachelor of Laws. On taking orders in the church, he was appointed an Honorary Chaplain to Dr. Edmund Law, Bishop of Carlisle, the Venerable Master of his College. Being presented to the Rectory of Panton, and Vicarage of Swinderby, in his native county, he entered on the discharge of his parochial duties, in the immediate circle of his family connections, and of several of his most esteemed friends. A decided enemy to all imposition on the consciences of men in matters of religion, he took an active share in the controversy concerning *subscription to articles of faith*; and in 1772, joined in a petition to the House of Commons for relief. At the same time, he determined to accept no further preferment where such subscription was by law required; convinced that many doctrines maintained in the *Liturgy* and *Articles* of the Church of England, were in direct contradiction to what appeared to him, from a careful examination of the Scriptures, to be the *word of God*. From the first, he declined to read the

creed usually ascribed to Athanasius, and afterwards made some further omissions in the morning service, without giving any offence to his congregation. In 1774, he married Miss Blackburne, the eldest daughter of the Archdeacon of Cleveland, a man whom he highly revered as the champion of genuine protestantism, and the undaunted advocate of a further reformation in the established church. He also acted in the commission of the peace for Lincolnshire; and, occasionally residing at Flintham-hall, near Newark, a seat belonging to his eldest brother; he became, in 1780, a Member of the Committee of Association for the county of Nottingham, for promoting a reduction of the public expenditure, and a reform in the representation of the people. In the meanwhile, the degree of Doctor in Divinity was conferred on him by the University of Edinburgh, on the recommendation of his friend, Bishop Law; a degree which requiring no subscription, he readily accepted. But as, in the course of his inquiries, he became more firmly convinced that "*God is one, and he only to be worshipped*," he disdained all further subterfuge; and, notwithstanding the claims of an infant family, the regard of his parishioners, and many personal and local attachments, he resigned his preferment in November 1782. Removing to London, he officiated successively, as assistant and sole minister, in the congregation, founded a few years before, by Mr. Lindsey, in Essex-street, for the express worship of

"the only true God, the Father of Jesus Christ." He concurred most heartily in the petitions presented to the House of Commons, from 1787 to 1790, for the repeal of the *Test-act*, and in 1792, in one for the repeal of the penal laws against Unitarians, which were so ably but unsuccessfully advocated by Mr. Fox. At length, in 1804, the liberal bequest of his friend Mr. Brand Hollis rewarded him for the sacrifices of his early life; and, resigning his ministry, he retired in the following spring to pass the remainder of his days in literary and agricultural amusements, at his truly classic mansion, the Hyde. He still, however, continued to take a lively interest in the advancement of his liberal views, and strenuously co-operated with Mr. Wyvill, in repeated petitions to Parliament, from 1808 to 1813, for the repeal of every law affecting liberty of conscience, on the broad basis of justice and of right. In the interim, his domestic happiness was interrupted by the death of Mrs. Disney, after a long illness, in October 1809, who left him two sons and a daughter. His own health was then on the decline, and after experiencing many severe and painful attacks which he bore with exemplary resignation, he at length sunk under them with a composure which became his virtues, and his reliance on the promise of a future life, revealed in the gospel.

He was a man of high honour and integrity, superior to every sort of equivocation and meanness, the steady friend of civil and religious liberty, and in his immediate sphere of action, the generous patron of many useful and benevolent designs. As a minister, he was averse to every description of intolerance, hypocrisy, and cant; the promoter of pure religion, and general philanthropy, and a faithful expounder of the unsophisticated Gospel of Christ. He was uncorrupted by the prosperity of his latter years; expended a handsome income with a discriminating liberality, and in the improvement of his grounds and residence, found constant occupation for the neighbouring poor. As a writer, he is chiefly known by his *Memoirs of Sykes, Jebb, and Jortin*, and by a collection of valuable *Sermons*, of which two additional volumes have recently appeared; but he was also the author of several *Tracts* relating to *free inquiry* and the *rights of conscience*, of some minor pieces of Biography, and of *Memoirs of Thomas Brand Hollis*, a handsome tribute to the memory of his benefactor, which was confined to private circulation. His loss will be deeply felt by his family and friends, his memory fondly cherished by every generous and enlightened mind, for

in an ardent zeal for the rights, in a lively attachment to the happiness of his country, and his species; in moderation, candour, and true Christian charity, he has scarcely left his equal behind him.

G. W. M.

January 1st, 1817.

Died of the measles, Dec. 30th, 1816, in his 7th year, after an illness of twelve days, HARVEY JOHNSTON, the only child of Mr. D. W. HARVEY, of *St. Helen's Place, London*, and grandson of Ebenezer Johnston, Esq. of Lewes. The fondness of parents frequently urges them, and very excusably, to form a loftier estimate of the capacities of their offspring, than can be allowed by steady and unprejudiced observers. Those, however, who were the admiring witnesses of the peculiar and endearing attainments of the child whose early death this article announces, will not readily urge the intrusion of this amiable defect. The contemplation of his spotless life will be a source of unceasing satisfaction to his parents and friends, as his untimely removal ought to be of serious instruction to them and to all. His constitution and frame of body was peculiarly delicate, and his intellectual powers were spun from the finest sensibilities of our nature. He was formed in an exquisite degree for happiness, but of an order too refined and generous to be long allied with the baseless pretensions of a vain inconstant world. From the earliest dawn of his reason, sentiments of piety and virtue displayed themselves, in his reverence for the name of God, and the liveliest attachment to his fellow creatures: and when an irritable feeling escaped him, it was only in connection with his marked aversion to cruelty and wanton pastime. In him the meanest animal, the humblest insect, found a sympathetic friend. His undeviating attachment to truth was so uniform and conspicuous, that his testimony was appealed to and decisive, alike by his instructors and his little companions, upon all occasions of mistrust—whilst his parents never knew him once attempt to deceive them. Nor was his love of truth more conspicuous than the powers and accuracy of his memory; for it was impossible to read or narrate incorrectly any circumstance he had once heard, without being instantly checked by him, and the error or omission promptly supplied. Can a doubt be entertained that a mind so capable of improvement, and adapted to the purest enjoyment, has been made in vain? that it was kindled for a moment, to be extinguished, and for ever? Reason concurs with Revelation to stifle the distracting thought, and kindly whispers that a plant so lovely, so full of promise,



is only transplanted to a fairer clime, where cheering suns, and milder skies, will swell the expanding blossom to a sweet, unfading flower. How loudly does this impressive event call upon those who have hitherto neglected the practice of virtue, to enlist instantly under her protecting banners;—whilst it ought to stimulate those, who have hitherto been tardy, to quicken their pace in the honourable course. What a powerful appeal does it make to those who are parents, to train their children to the love and culture of piety:—the present hour alone is theirs—the next may for ever darken their fondest, brightest visions. To the youngest and most joyous, this sad event speaks with instructive force. A few short weeks since, this child was the sprightliest of the gay; health and delight beamed in his countenance; his heart beat high with present and anticipated happiness; and now where is he? “Thou shalt seek him in the morning, but he shall not be;” the eyes that surveyed him with rapture, seek for him in vain: “as a dream the image has fled away, and cannot be found; he has been chased away as a vision of the night.”

The afflicted parents, who rear this frail monument to the early charms and virtues of their only child, would fain impress with earnestness upon the minds of those, who, like them, may be suddenly called to sustain the severest stroke a mysterious Providence can inflict, that no consolation is adequate to sustain the drooping spirits, but a steady, unshaken conviction, that all the events of our lives are under the direction of unerring wisdom and infinite goodness.—To this pleasing persuasion, they anxiously unite the hope of an inseparable re-union in another and far better state of being:

“This the blest theme that cheers our voice,

The grave is not our darling's prison;  
The stone that cover'd all our joys,  
Is roll'd away, and ‘he is risen.’”

Lately, at *Berwick upon Tweed*, after a lingering illness, Mr. JAMES GRAHAM, coroner of that town, aged 69 years. Though born in Orthodoxy, his active mind soon perceived the value of free inquiry; and that, to use his own words, “mere pretension too often accompanied a state religion.” In the changes which unlimited inquiry seldom fails to produce, he had to encounter (and who with so fervent a love of truth has not had to encounter) those “pains and penalties,” by which a dissent from the creed of our fathers generally is accompanied, but which, for the sake of survivors, are sometimes better overlooked

than related. The same love of inquiry that induced him to adopt, even in early life, Unitarian principles, confirmed him also a votary of improvements in the town where he lived, and in the country to which as a subject he belonged.

In filling up the following slight sketch of his labours, the reader may form some idea of his active mind. It is principally owing to his exertions that a very extensive pier was erected, by which the harbour was rendered beyond comparison more commodious than it ever had been, even when benefitted by the “old pier,” though built by Queen Elizabeth.\* It was by his means that the old guard-house was removed which stood in the north end of the High-street, and considerably obstructed the passage, presenting a dreary specimen of the taste of our forefathers in some of their buildings, particularly those destined for the accommodation of the military. The paving and lighting of Berwick, and decreasing the rise of Hyde Hill, at the south entrance of that town, were owing also to his public spirit. It was by his labour that an abundance of water was brought into the town from the nine wells, about one mile south of Berwick, and that the Scotch gate, at the northern entrance, was widened, and otherwise so altered as to admit the passage of loaded waggons, without the great inconvenience of unloading them, that they might pass,

\* There was one clause in the bill which enabled the commissioners to purchase stone in every direction not exceeding four miles from the intended pier, and the value of the stones, breaking the ground, &c. was to be ascertained by a jury chosen for that purpose. Although Lord Walsingham made no objection to this clause in the first bill, he offered it in the second, when, to avoid every dispute as much as possible, it was given up, and the commissioners left to procure stones on the best terms they could. The consequence had nearly proved fatal to the pier, for whoever was possessed of a quarry where proper stones were likely to be found, either refused them altogether, or fixed such a price as the commissioners could not give. This difficulty was completely got over by Mr. Graham applying to the governors of Greenwich Hospital, who are proprietors of some rocky banks about one mile from the harbour, where the quantity of stone is inexhaustible. They immediately granted liberty to quarry what stones might be wanted, and on terms so liberal, that not only the commissioners, but all interested in that public concern, will long remember with gratitude.

a detriment to business which the old gates of some other towns yet unfortunately possess.

His political principles, though for a long time they only seemed to single him out in that town as a mark for unenlightened censure, yet within the last sixteen or twenty years of his life they endeared him to his townsmen, and gave him that consideration amongst them, by which he afterwards effected the improvements we have just enumerated. For these exertions he received two signal proofs of the universal regard of his townsmen. At one time he was chaired at the town-hall, the place of meeting, and brought amidst the acclamations of thousands to his own house; and so great was the crowd, that the shops on each side of the High-street where he lived, were shut up, a circumstance unprecedented there, even at elections. At another, he was presented with a valuable silver cup, "*as a token of respect and esteem for his patriotic exertions in defence of the just rights of the people, and his laudable zeal for the improvement of this town and harbour.*"\* By "the just rights of the people," the donors alluded to his former exertions in favour of religious liberty, and a parliamentary reform, in both of which he was unwearied, at the time when this took place, as well as when he was chaired. The names of "Waithman and Graham" were to be seen on every door and shutter of the town, whilst the latter was called "the Berwick Waithman."—

In the more endearing offices of private life,

"His presence made a little holiday,  
And every face was drest in smiles to  
meet him."

His heart was ever open to the tear of distress, and he always softened when he could not cure the misery: but with the sentiments of honour and of faithful delicacy to those for whom he was the almoner, as well as to the objects of their attention, he never assumed to be himself the donor, but gave the bounty, together with the names of the charitable. A similar principle of honour invigorated his endeavours, when appointed a trustee for any public charity or public building. "I accept the office on this condition only, that my accounts of receipts and expenditures shall be inspected yearly: my vouchers shall be produced, and I expect in return an acknowledgment from the subscribers of their satisfaction in the integrity of my trust;

\* Copied from the inscription on the cup.

none shall say that I ever directed the smallest fraction of such a deposit, in any other way than to meet the wishes of the proprietors; my accounts from the beginning shall be at all times open to examination; nor will I ever abuse those inquirers who wish to know that I am an honest man." Such was the principle on which he acted, whether the subscription was to supply a soup kitchen, to build a chapel, to procure meal or potatoes for the poor, to erect a public institution, or to pull down a public nuisance. His labour was ready, his interest exerted, and whatever donations he received, were entered most faithfully in the names of the donors. To get his fame trumpeted abroad by the stale expedient of a person whom he had purposely obliged, was beneath the character of this friend of humanity and general improvement. And yet often has the writer of this seen the silent tear trickle down his face, and sometimes he has heard of the silent offering of his unambitious friend, not in the praises of a hireling, but in the blessings of the poor themselves.

To conclude.—As a warm friend of civil and religious liberty; as an unwearied improver of the town in which he lived; as an honourable distributor of collected charity; as faithful to his public engagements, and never shrinking from the most minute examination of his public accounts; as the promoter of peace and good will, his memory will be cherished by his friends and by his townsmen:—when these repose in the silent grave, the public improvements that he effected will transmit his name to their posterity. Would that such remembrances may excite other minds to follow his footsteps: would that, as in James Graham, the widow and the fatherless might always find a friend!

Died at his house at Clapton, after a long decline, aged 61, EDWARD LANGDON MACKMURDO, Esq. one of the oldest members of the Unitarian congregation at Hackney. His name has been connected for many years with all our institutions for the promotion of religion and virtue and freedom, of which he was an unostentatious but liberal supporter. He was known throughout a wide circle, and highly esteemed for his enlightened principles, amiable feelings and sterling character. He has left a large family, who, in the remembrance and imitation of his virtues, and in the enjoyment of the blessings which his paternal wisdom bestowed upon them, will keep up his name and pronounce the best eulogium on his memory.



*Addition to the Account of Rev. D. Taylor,*  
Vol. XI. p. 790.

We are requested to add the following to the list of Mr. Taylor's publications, which was omitted through inadvertence, viz.

"Jesus the only begotten Son of God: Observations on Mr. Davies's Sermon at Belper, entitled 'Jesus of Nazareth the Son of Joseph,' in Seven Letters to a Friend."

## INTELLIGENCE.

### DOMESTIC.

#### RELIGIOUS.

*Halifax, 20th January, 1817.*

SIR,

As I presume the subscription towards defraying the debt (350*l.*) upon the Unitarian Chapel at Newchurch, in Rossendale (M. Repos. X. 313), may be considered as closed, it becomes my pleasing duty to lay before the subscribers an account of the manner in which their liberality has been appropriated.

Amount reported in M. Repos.

XI. 558.....	274	5	0
Mr. Mace, Tenterden.....	1	0	0
Thomas Hardy, Esq. Walworth.....	2	2	0
	277	7	0

From this deduct

Four subscriptions reported *twice*: compare M. Repos. Vol.

X. 596, 461, 527,

XI. 124..... 14 5 0

Error in Bristol account, X. 527,

viz. 1*l.* 1*s.* for 1*l.* 0 1 0

Error in Newcastle

account..... 0 1 0

14 7 0

Total of actual subscriptions 263 0 0

N. B. In the Newcastle list, Vol. X. 458, the name and subscription of Mr. Swan is omitted, though the amount is carried to the account.

Mr. Swan, New-castle..... 0 5 0

*J. T. to Rossendale.*

DR.

By subscriptions (M. Repos.

Vol. XI. 558) and grant

from the Unitarian Fund.. 263 0 0

*R. Contra.*

CR.

By paid to Mr. John Ashworth, Minister and acting Trustee of the Unitarian Chapel, Newchurch, in Rossendale (see below).... 261 6 8

By postages, and carriage of tracts..... 1 13 4

263 0 0

The debt upon the chapel of 350*l.* was due in the following proportions to the following individuals, all of whom, except one, held promissory notes, bearing interest for their several claims. These notes have been given up to me, indorsed with a receipt in full of all claims, except in the case of the two last, who have only been paid in part, but have indorsed the notes which they hold with a receipt of such part, and have also given a separate receipt for the same.

*Unitarian Chapel at Newchurch.*

DR.

To James Ashworth.....	10	0	0
Edmund Ogden.....	60	0	0
Abraham Lawton.....	100	0	0
James Holt.....	20	0	0
Jonathan Rudman.....	20	0	0
Ditto, ditto.....	60	0	0
Henry Whittles.....	80	0	0
	350	0	0

*R. Contra.*

CR.

By paid James Ashworth....	10	0	0
Edmund Ogden.....	60	0	0
Abraham Lawton.....	100	0	0
James Holt.....	20	0	0
Jonathan Rudman.....	20	0	0
Ditto, in part of 60 <i>l.</i> .....	31	6	8
Henry Whittles, in part of 80 <i>l.</i>	20	0	0
By debt still due upon the chapel.....	88	13	4
	350	0	0

(Copy.)

Of the sum of 263*l.* (the total of actual subscriptions, as reported in the M. Repos.) the sum of 261*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* has been received by me and paid in liquidation of the debt (350*l.*) as stated above by Dr. Thomson, which, with an account of 1*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* for postages, and carriage of parcels of tracts, makes up the sum total of 263*l.*

(Signed) JOHN ASHWORTH.

(Witness) JOHN BEATTIE.

January 16, 1817.

It results from the statement above, that by the liberality of the Unitarian public, the oppressive debt upon the chapel of 350*l.* has been reduced to 88*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

JOHN THOMSON.

Mr. Ashworth's pamphlet will be put to the press on the 1st of February, 1817.

Liberal allowance will be made to tract societies, or to individuals taking 25 copies or more. It is intitled, "*An Account of the Rise and Progress of the Unitarian Doctrine in the Societies at Rochdale, Newchurch in Rosendale, and other Places, formerly in Connection with the late Rev. Joseph Cooke. In Ten Letters to a Friend.*" By John Ashworth, price 1s.

Erratum in Vol. XI. p. 124,

For "W. Jones, Esq. Manchester, 5l." read "Samuel Jones, Esq. Greenhill, near Manchester, 5l."

#### Manchester Quarterly Meeting.

The last *Quarterly Meeting of Ministers* generally denominated Presbyterian, in the district of *Manchester*, was held on the 2d January, 1817, at the chapel of the Rev. Wm. Hawkes. Seventeen ministers were present at the chapel, and the number of hearers, though not large, was perhaps rather greater than generally assemble on similar occasions. The Rev. T. C. Holland, of Preston, introduced the service, and the Rev. Jos. Ashton, of Dukinfield, preached from Hos. vi. 6. At the close of the service, the ordinary business of the meeting was transacted, and a new member was added to the association. The dinner at the Bridge-water Arms was less numerously attended than usual, only thirty-one gentlemen being present, whereas on some occasions we remember to have seen between sixty and seventy. But this circumstance did not by any means diminish the interest of the meeting.

On the evening of the same day a sermon was preached by the Rev. Wm. Jevons, of Altringham, on behalf of the Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Book and Tract Society,—The introductory parts of the service having been kindly undertaken by the Rev. W. Turner, of Newcastle. At the close of the service there was a collection for the benefit of the said society. The sermon and collection are intended to be yearly continued.

On the next day the annual meeting of the Book and Tract Society was held.—Besides various other ordinary resolutions, which, as they are necessary to the successful operation of every such institution, it is not thought unnecessary to detail, it was resolved unanimously, that Mr. Jevons be respectfully requested to print in a cheap form, at the expence of the Society, the sermon preached on its behalf the evening before; and he kindly consented to comply with the wishes of the meeting. The sermon will be published in a very short time, and will be inserted in the So-

ciety's Catalogue for this year. There can be no doubt that this institution, since its first establishment, about six years ago, has done great service to the cause of pure Christianity, and aided the progress of religious truth and righteousness; and the best thanks of the friends of truth are owing to those persons who first contrived, and have since conducted, an engine of so mighty a power in the operations of intellect and reason. May its operations be carried on with still increasing effect.

Since the forementioned meetings were held, an Unitarian Fellowship has been formed in this town, the specific objects of which are, *first*, to extend the operation of the Book and Tract Society, by the payment of small subscriptions at short intervals (one penny a week) so as to enable the poorer classes of society to avail themselves of its provisions, by purchasing books to the amount of their subscriptions; and *secondly*, by means of donations (every excess above one penny per week being considered a donation), and unclaimed subscriptions, to create a fund for general purposes in aid of the Unitarian cause. At the time of the constituent meeting, which took place last week, the number of members amounted to between thirty and forty. The general meetings of the Fellowship will be held once a quarter, of the committee once a month. A meeting for religious purposes, to be denominated the Religious Meeting of the Fellowship, will be held once a fortnight.

W. J.

Manchester, Jan. 1817.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

##### *Deistical Principles a Disqualification for Parental Duty.*

[We copy the following from the newspapers, reserving our comments, if any be required, till the Lord Chancellor has pronounced a judgment. Ed.]

COURT OF CHANCERY, FRIDAY, JAN. 24.

##### *Westbrook v. Shelley.*

Sir S. Romilly moved for an order to prevent the defendant exercising any guardianship over his children, on the ground of his Deistical principles. It appeared that the defendant had some time since written a book, called *Queen Mab*, which openly avowed the principles of Deism; and in such a case he could certainly not be considered a proper person for educating youth. The interests of society would obviously be endangered were persons of these principles permitted to instil them into their children. Interference in such a case was peremptorily called for, and he (Sir S.) had no doubt,



from his Lordship's well known attention to the duties of parents, and his anxiety respecting every thing where morals were concerned, what his decision in this case would be. Sir A. Pigott, on the other hand, contended, that as his client had written this work merely for his own

amusement, without the most distant idea of his children seeing it, it was extremely hard that he should be deprived of the exercise of his parental rights, as the work was a mere effusion of imagination.—His Lordship is to give judgment on a future day.

## MONTHLY RETROSPECT of PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

### *The Christian's Survey of the Political World.*

BEFORE this meets the public eye, the parliament will have resumed its discussions, and a more important session has not been holden for many years in the country. It meets under very particular circumstances. The distresses of the nation are now completely unfolded, and with them the truths that have so often been expressed in the House of Commons, and which, to use the Speaker's language, are as notorious as the sun at noon day, have made their way into every cottage, and are understood and felt by the peasant as well as the peer, by the commonest labourer and manufacturer as well as by the greatest adept in political oeconomy. How far universal opinion will have an effect on the House of Commons, as it is at present constituted, time will develop. It is impossible that affairs should be managed as they have been for some years past, but which party will gain the ascendancy it is not easy to determine. One particular feature in the history of these eventful times must not be passed over unnoticed.

The great question at issue is the reform of the House of Commons, and it is argued that this House no longer answers the end for which it was established, namely, the interference of the people in the affairs of government: for the voice of the people, it is said, has not its due weight in that House, being overwhelmed by that of the oligarchists, or the proprietors of boroughs, who can, when united, carry every thing before them, or a majority of them, by uniting, as it suits their turn, with the popular or government representatives, determine every thing as they please. Hence both prince and people are shackled. The prince is hampered in his choice of individuals for the public service, as he must attend to the solicitations of those families who have so great weight in the House of Commons, and sharing with each other the places of government, it is turned too much to their private advantage. This is felt by the people in the increase of their

taxes, as due care cannot be taken of the expenditure, when it is the interest of so many persons that it should not be too diligently inquired into. To these complaints on the state of the House of Commons, which has grown out of particular circumstances, it is observed that sufficient attention is not paid to the increasing population as well as general improvement of the country. Whilst time has been decreasing the population of some towns and boroughs, villages have grown into opulence, and present the aspect of flourishing cities. But the deserted towns continue to send their quota of members to parliament, whilst the new population is denied any share in the legislature.

To remedy this evil, an extension of the right of suffrage is called for, but on its limits many doubts are entertained. Some are for its being extended to all who have arrived at the age of maturity fixed by our law; others would exclude servants and persons subsisting on alms; others would confine it to householders paying parish rates. On the mode of election, also, is a difference of opinion: some would have it by ballot, others by open votes; and the opinion seems to be general that attention should be paid to the situation of the voters, so that no one should have far to go from his home to exercise his right. It is presumed that by this increase of the number of voters, the present notorious corruption in the House of Commons would be abated, and that persons thus elected would pay a greater attention to the public than to their private interest.

The above sentiments have been discussed in public meetings in various parts of the United Kingdom, by county meetings, meetings of corporate bodies, and assemblages of the people in different districts collected together for the express purpose of petitioning parliament for a reform. Of the latter meetings, that which has occasioned the most remarks, was holden in Spa Fields, near London, at

which it was supposed between thirty and forty thousand persons were present. Two meetings have been holden at this place, and at the latter of them, or rather before the business of the day took place, a circumstance occurred which might have been attended with very serious consequences.

A number of persons went from the ground in a tumultuous manner, and marched through the city with banners. The first outrage committed by them was at the north end of Fleet-market, where they broke into a gun maker's shop, seized some arms, and wounded dangerously a person in the shop. Thence they paraded by the Exchange, where several were taken, and went into the Minorities, where they broke into the houses of several gun makers, and provided themselves with arms. The appearance of the military occasioned a hasty retreat, and they very soon slid away, leaving no other trace of their passage, than the scattered arms, which they threw down in their retreat.

The government papers laboured hard for a long time to construe this tumultuous march into a preconcerted plot of insurrection, and to connect it with the meeting in Spa Fields. But nothing appeared either in the previous examinations, or the subsequent trials of these rioters, to countenance such an opinion; and it was evidently a hasty proceeding of miserable sailors and riotous people, knowing not what they were about, and intending only temporary outrages.

The meetings in the Spa Fields were conducted with a degree of propriety that was hardly to be expected; and this has been the case in general in every part of the kingdom. The persons who conducted them usually applied first to the magistrates of the district, who took the precaution of strengthening their hands by an additional number of peace officers to prevent tumult: but this now appears to have been an unnecessary precaution, as the persons assembled dispersed themselves quietly, as soon as they had passed their resolutions, and prepared their intended petitions. The city of London has taken the lead on this occasion, and recommended similar proceedings in corporate bodies; and Cornwall has done the same for the counties, but their calls hitherto have not been attended with much success. On the whole, we may observe that, from what has been done, it is evident that the sentiments of the Speaker of the House of Commons are now generally diffused, that the populace or mob, as it is called by the government writers, are much better informed than is generally imagined; and whether their petitions are attended to or dismissed with contempt, many important results may be

expected. We shall observe only, that unless the people are as virtuous as they are well informed, it is in vain to expect those advantages which are presumed to be the effect of an extension of suffrage; and if the respectable part of the community remain silent, they will have only to blame themselves, if measures should be adopted, that may increase instead of diminishing the present ferment in the country.

In the midst of these meetings for reform, it is some satisfaction to observe that the work of charity goes on with a considerable degree of alacrity. All minds seem to be deeply impressed with the calamity that has befallen the country, and every where the hand of benevolence is open to alleviate the distresses of our fellow creatures. Whilst this is the case, we may reasonably hope that a similar spirit may be imbibed by those who are to decide upon the great questions now brought before them; that they will consult the temper in some degree of the people, and rectify those abuses, which no honest man can palliate, and which every good man would wish to see removed.

In France they have been deliberating on the representation of the people, but all the experience of the past unhappy times seems to have been lost upon them. A dread of the people prevails, and they do not consider that the lower classes of the present day are very different from what they were in the times of that horrid monster Louis the Fourteenth. Instead of increasing the right of suffrage, they have done every thing in their power to diminish it; and the future representatives are to be chosen by a number of persons not equivalent to a two hundred and fiftieth part of the population. Still such a representation will make an essential difference in the government of the country, which cannot be carried on as it was during the usurpation of the Bourbons. For it must ever be recollected that it was the Bourbon dynasty which destroyed the meetings of the states, overthrew the ancient checks on the monarchy, and established a military government.

They are equally afraid of securities for personal liberty, and their regulations tend to bring that within narrower limits. It is natural also that to such persons the liberty of the press should appear in a very dangerous and odious light, and they are preparing to bring their newspapers still more under the control of government. These attempts are, however, vain; they may succeed for a time, but information has gone abroad, and knowledge cannot be suppressed. The people have learned a bitter lesson, and they have nothing to do but to remain quiet. The time will arrive,



as it did after the tumults in our country, when the government will be placed on a proper footing, and such landmarks will be fixed upon as shall secure to the people those rights, which no precedent of time, no decrees of assemblies, can take from them. It will by degrees be known, that government is not intended for the interest of a few, but for that of the many, and that the pretended plea of legitimacy cannot authorize a violation of the laws of society.

It is said that the finances of their country are in such a situation, that they cannot go on without a loan, and that they have turned their eyes towards the wealth of our monied men for a supply of their wants. Whatever is done, it is to be hoped, that this will be a private concern between the lenders and the existing government, and that ours will not interfere to guarantee the payment of the interest. If our people choose to lend their money, let them do it; let them take what security they please; and if they lose the whole, no one in this country except those who are interested in it, will regret their loss.

In Germany the discussions on liberty and political economy continue on a very enlarged plan. Their diet does not seem to make any great progress, nor is much to be expected from it. But in the mean time knowledge is gaining ground very fast among the people. They have their eyes open to every step taken by the governors; and they who fought so valiantly to shake off the yoke of one despot, will not easily bend to that of petty ones, who for so long a time misruled that extensive empire.

Spain is going on in its old course. The Jesuits are gaining a fast hold in it, and the inquisition will take effectual care to shut out light from that unhappy country. Their wonted cruelty continues to be exercised in their American colonies, but they have received such a check in the Caraccas, as promises to demolish entirely their sovereignty over that part of the southern continent. There is unhappily a dreadful spirit of revenge, excited by the alternation of success, so that death reigns there with all the savage ferocity inherent to the Spanish name, since the establishment of their inquisi-

tion. The black government of Domingo is now firmly established, and affords a proof, that all the reproaches of the whites on the want of capacity in their brethren of a different colour, are ill-founded. A gazette from that island, displaying the process of the taking of the oath to the constitution by the president, is not inferior to any that ever proceeded from the cabinets of St. James's or Versailles; and these quondam slaves acted the parts of grandees with as much propriety and dignity as any assemblage of knights of the garter at Windsor, or of the holy ghost at Versailles. In the affairs of government it is probable that they will not be found inferior to the counties of Europe, but, whether they will discover the same duplicity and versatility and intrigue, time must develope.

The congress of the United States is re-assembled, and the president has for the first time addressed it in the language becoming the head of a free people, and with those sentiments of respectful gratitude on the approaching cessation of his office, which naturally flows from a mind sensible of the dignity of his situation, and of his return to the body of the people, whose interest it had been his constant employment to support. Whilst Great Britain is disputing on the subject of representation, the United States afford a practical lesson of its expediency and facility. The election of a president, for which many hundred thousand votes have been given, has been carried on with not a hundredth part of the confusion or expence, as that for the election of a representative for Yorkshire. The votes are taken with the utmost facility, and no one has far to go from his residence to give it. Bribery and corruption cannot take place, for no purse could support the expence for it; nor can any treasury mandates there influence a voter on one side or the other. The practicability of universal suffrage is thus manifested to the world; and perhaps it will be found, that the greater part of those who argue against its expediency in any country, do it from ancient prejudices rather than sound principles of political reasoning.

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*Erratum.*—Vol. XI. p. 701, col. 2, 33 lines from top, for *injurious*, read *injudicious*.